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THE INSIDE STORY



Michael Gurnier/Galveston Daily News

Union Carbide's cooperation with OSHA inspectors is the exception, not the rule.

Texas suffers the cancer of prosperity

By John Judis

TEXAS CITY, TEXAS

The Gulf Coast area around Houston, which includes Freeport, Galveston, Texas City, Beaumont and Port Arthur, is one of the fastest-growing and most prosperous in the country. Companies advertise on the radio for scarce workers. The cable TV channels, which run stock quotations or weather forecasts in the North, here broadcast a constant stream of job opportunities.

The Houston area's prosperity is built primarily on oil and the petrochemical industry. The Houston skyline is dotted with oil company skyscrapers. Many of the companies that make drilling equipment are located around Houston. And the Houston port cities are the center for the country's petrochemical industry. Dow's largest U.S. plant is at Freeport. AMOCO and Union Carbide are in Texas City. Texaco is in Beaumont, and Gulf Oil is in Port Arthur.

But as New Jersey residents learned long ago, there is one important drawback to prosperity based on petrochemicals: a cancer rate that approaches epidemic proportions. The Gulf Coast has now pulled even with the worst parts of New Jersey. And the alarming cancer rate among the workers at some petrochemical plants has spurred federal investigations.

Three years ago, a hospital resident in Galveston became concerned when an acquaintance who worked at Union Carbide in Texas City died of glioblastoma, a rare and deadly form of brain cancer. Some initial inquiries found that other workers at Union Carbide had died of glioblastoma. A complaint to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) prompted an investigation.

Last year, OSHA investigators, led by Dr. Victor Alexander, published a preliminary report: 18 brain cancer deaths had been discovered between 1965 and 1980—about twice the rate in the non-Union Carbide population. While the investigators cited employee contact with 10 known or suspected carcinogens, they were unable to determine any single chemical cause.

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The OSHA study of Union Carbide also discovered another distressing statistic. In comparing the health records of Union Carbide employees with the records of other Gulf Coast workers, investigators found an unusual concentration of glioblastoma among Dow Chemical workers in Freeport. According to Dr. Gordon Reeve of the National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety, the incidence of glioblastoma among Dow workers was about two-and-a-half times normal.

The same results showed up at the AMOCO refinery in Texas City. Workers there, according to Reeve, were two to two-and-a-half times more prone to glioblastoma and about seven or eight times more prone to melanoma, a rare and usually fatal form of skin cancer, than the normal population.

Investigations initiated by the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI) at the Gulf Oil refinery in Port Arthur again mirrored the Texas City-Freeport results: a twice normal incidence of glioblastoma.

Union Carbide has been relatively cooperative with OSHA investigators, who plan to release a fuller report later this spring. But they tend to minimize the cancer threat to their employees. "Epidemiology is a dull tool," plant manager Damon Engel told me. "At the time Dr. Alexander wrote that article, there were huge gaps in its accuracy." But NIOSH's Reeve said that he expected the fuller report would reveal an even greater cancer risk than the preliminary report did.

Engel also downplayed the threat to employee morale. "There has certainly been no panic on the part of our employees," he said. "The longer the employee has been around, the less they are worried, because they believe in the credibility of the company."

But interviews with employees and employee relatives revealed concern that in some cases bordered on panic. One employee, who worked for Union Carbide for most of his life and had spent 15 years in the highly suspect vinyl chloride section of the plant had been literally incapacitated by fear of developing brain tumors and had had to secure early retirement through disability. "It became increasingly difficult for him even to walk by the plant or look at the gate" his son said.

Another employee, a Vietnam veteran who has worked at Union Carbide for 14 years, typified the employee mood, a mixture of fear and resignation. "I worry about it. I worry about it a lot," he said. "We're playing poker with our lives."

"But I try not to dwell on it. You've got to work somewhere. And the money here is pretty good. You just hope you're not the one who catches it."

Several families of Union Carbide workers who have died of glioblastoma are now suing the company for gross negligence. Mike Liles says the constant exposure to chemicals killed his father Joe Liles, who died of glioblastoma in 1978 at the age of 62. Joe Liles worked at Union Carbide for 35 years. "I can't imagine any company dealing with chemicals not testing them before they transgressed it on the public," Liles told an interviewer.

Dow's intransigence.

Most often, the hazards of a workplace are not discovered by inquiring physicians (almost never by plant physicians), but by the workers themselves. Dr. Sharon Itaya, the district health director for OCAW, tells the story of an AMOCO worker who in reading the company newspaper discovered that refinery workers were regularly dying at age 55, while executives were dying at an average age of 78.

Once a worker complains, the next step has to be

made by OSHA. But OSHA often meets firm resistance from the companies. Union Carbide is the exception; Dow is the rule.

Dr. Marvin Legator, a national authority on plant hazards who works at the University of Texas hospital in Galveston, was employed by Dow until 1977. When a 13-year study that Legator supervised found a high incidence of health risks to Dow workers, Dow called off the study.

An April 1981 article in *Houston City Magazine* by Lee Hochberg chronicles Dow's resistance to any OSHA investigation of its Freeport medical records. Last May, Dow denied an OSHA/NIOSH team access to its records, charging that the investigation might reveal "trade secret information" and threaten employee "privacy and protection of their individual rights."

When Rep. Bob Eckhardt threatened last May to sponsor an investigation of Dow, the company released memoranda of studies that purported to show that "there is nothing...indicating that the number of deaths due to brain cancer in the total work population is above the expected norm for a population of that size."

Nationally, Dow has been a leading opponent of OSHA. It helped set up the American Industrial Health Council (AIHC), chaired by Dow president Paul Orefice. One AIHC representative, Dr. Francis Roe, testified before OSHA in 1979 that "cancer is probably one of nature's ways of eliminating sexually effete individuals who would otherwise, in nature's view, compete for available food resources without advantage to the species as a whole."

Most Gulf Coast companies follow the Dow pattern. Last January, when an explosion rocked the AMOCO refinery, the company demanded that OSHA investigators secure a search warrant. When they got a warrant the company still refused to let them in.

According to OCAW union officials, many companies try to shortcircuit any employee complaints by raising the specter of plant shutdowns. The companies also employ statistical obfuscation. When OCAW and NCI reported the high cancer rate among Gulf Oil Refinery workers in Port Arthur, the company countered with a study of its own showing no perceptible threat to employees. But the company included the records of white-collar workers, who were not as likely to be exposed to toxic chemicals, in its study of employee risk. The OCAW/NCI study focused on blue-collar workers.

With a change in administration in Washington and with "New Right" protegee Jack Fields having replaced Eckhardt in Congress, there is little chance that much will be done about the Gulf Coast's cancer epidemic. Ben Bare, the director of the local OSHA office, complained that he presently had only four industrial hygienists to cover a six-county area. "I could use three times as many people," Bare said. "I generate enough complaints that the only thing I can do is complaint inspection. I can never do any general inspections. I never go into the plants and identify the problem so that things can be prevented from happening."

Another government official investigating the cancer cases in the Gulf Coast is similarly pessimistic. "I am worried about how we are going to get our work done now," he said. "We had a lot of trouble operating on our old budget. Now there are going to be substantial budget cuts."

Dr. Legator expects that the eventual downturn in the Gulf Coast's industry will also imperil investigations. "As the economy slows, workers are less willing to get involved in health matters," Legator said. "There is more pressure not to say anything. We're headed for difficult times."

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Miners' rights are not for sale



By David Moberg

BECKLEY, W.VA.

LOOKING HAGGARD FROM SEVERAL days of selling the new coal contract to union members who didn't appear to be in a buying mood, United Mine Workers president Sam Church plodded through yet another recitation of the agreement's provisions for over an hour, discretely but anxiously running through a sizeable quantity of chewing tobacco favored among miners. Before him in the armory in Beckley—headquarters for the second largest district in the union—were several hundred miners following the language in their contract books. They listened quietly and politely. No contract-burning or egg-throwing or pickets such as Church had faced elsewhere.

Then it was question time. Lines formed at the two microphones. One of the first to speak was Kenneth Murdock, 22, from Glen Daniels, a miner for five years.

"Brother Church, you've said you hope the men know good money when they see it," he said calmly. Then, his voice growing more emphatic, he continued, "But you've asked us to take money and give up union rights. I'm a union man, and I'll not give up my rights, not even for \$200 a day." The applause was long and strong. For the next hour and a half the sentiments were the same. "If this contract is approved," Ray Gibson, 53, president of the largest local in the union, warned, "then I predict this is the beginning of the end of the UMWA."

The next day, March 31, miners in the Beckley area turned out in unusually high numbers for a summery day of balloting and rejected the contract by a margin of more than three to one. In adjacent District 17, centered in Charleston, the margin was nearly nine to one, despite high unemployment in the coalfields. Initial results across the country showed a 68 percent rejection (nearly 70,000 to 33,000), with only parts of the Midwest and West giving narrow approval to a contract that Church had originally predicted would win by nearly the same margin as it lost.

To many in the national press, it appeared that the contract, with its 33 percent wage increase, new dental plan and a \$100-per-month pension for widows of miners covered by the 1950 pension fund, would easily be approved—especially since it did not include the company demand to mine coal on Sundays.

But to the men and women in the coalfields, the fine print of the contract re-

vealed a potentially disastrous threat to the union as an institution. The combination of several clauses concerning subcontracting, leasing and the opening up of new coal lands with the abandonment of a 1964 requirement that companies pay \$1.90 a ton in royalties to the union health and retirement fund on any non-union coal that they buy "creates the right of the companies to lease the union out from under us," according to one international executive board member.

So the strike that started on March 27—and may rival the 110-day strike of 1977-78, when miners turned down two proposed contracts—has now become primarily a fight against what is widely seen as a concerted plan by the coal companies, now backed by the power of the oil companies that control over 40 percent of coal production, to break the union. Probably more than any other workers, the 160,000 coal miners see their union not simply as a means of bettering wages and working conditions, but as an almost spiritual brotherhood, a way of life, and the bulwark against the tyranny that the coal operators have inflicted on the coalfields in the past.

The threat of non-union coal.

Since 1970 the union share of U.S. coal has dropped from 70 percent to about half (44 percent under the contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association, or BCOA). Most of that shift is a result of the expanded production of lower-grade coal from western strip mines, which the union has not succeeded in organizing. But even in the heavily unionized eastern coalfields, there has been an increase in non-union mines, many of them small operations that sell their coal to the big companies. Even when unionized, many of these small mine operators violate the contract and shortchange workers, then disappear. During the past contract, UMW officials estimate, there may have been as many as 150 such fly-by-night companies opening and closing in West Virginia and even more in other states. Few issues agitate miners more than the growth of non-union coal, which threatens their power and security.

The key problems with the rejected contract arose in subtle changes of language in the first article concerning "scope and coverage." In the past, the contract required subcontracted work—including construction, hauling or repair of machinery—to be performed by UMW members. But last year the third circuit federal court upheld a National Labor Relations Board ruling on a complaint filed by Amax Corporation that

such a clause was an unfair labor practice under a 1959 amendment to the National Labor Relations Act that prohibits unions and employers from agreeing not to deal with another employer or person. The Supreme Court refused to hear a union appeal.

The proposed contract dropped the requirement that all subcontracting, including work now performed by the 11,000 union construction workers under a separate contract with the Association of Bituminous Contractors, be done by UMW members. The long-time general counsel to the union, Harrison Combs, convinced Church that he had no choice, overruling dissenting legal views within the union.

But there were other options. Legally the Amax decision is not binding beyond the third circuit, and other courts might

rule differently. In any case, Rich Trumka, a miner formerly in the union's legal department who is now running for the international executive board, argues that "one of the most legal clauses would be to say there will be no subcontracting. Or they could say there will be no subcontracting unless every miner on the panel [the roster of mine employees] is working six days a week. Or they could have inserted a union standards clause that says if work does get subcontracted out it must be to someone with economic standards equal to or greater than that in the UMWA contract."

Also, in the past, coal companies could not sell or transfer their properties without obtaining an agreement that the successor would assume obligations under the union contract. Although the Amax challenge to this clause was won by the union, the proposed contract had changed the wording so that companies could lease or in other ways shift control of their properties without arranging for continued contractual protection for workers. The proposed contract also sur-rendered the previous requirement that the union automatically be recognized as the agent on all of the coallands belonging to a company under the contract. Instead, the union would have had to prove it was the representative, that is organize each new coal operation of BCOA companies, even shifts across the road or around a mountain.

These changed articles "are the absolute guts of this contract," Trumka argues. "Without the protection they afford us, the UMW could become extinct, like the Cro-Magnons."

Fly-by-night mining.

Miners fear that companies will increasingly feed coal from non-union mines, opened independently or through some arrangement with the big companies, through the expensive coal-cleaning machinery at the major unionized mines.

Such new opportunities for non-union operations take on added significance

Continued on page 10

Ray Gibson, president of the largest local, warned that the proposed contract would mark "the beginning of the end of the UMWA."



IN SHORT

Wanna buy a city?

As it turns out, the 20,000 tons of chemical wastes that the Hooker Chemical and Plastics Corporation spilled in Love Canal made up only the tip of the toxic heap in western New York State. Seven miles away, for example, the company poured four times that amount of liquid and solid wastes into its Hyde Park Boulevard Landfill, in a marshy area bordering the city of Niagara Falls. Another of Hooker's many dumps in the vicinity sits right next to the city's drinking water filtration plant.

Between 1953 and 1975, the Hyde Park Landfill grew to its current preeminence as, among other things, the site of perhaps the world's largest concentration of the deadly chemical dioxin. Nearby residents and industrial workers quickly noticed that reddish chemicals were draining from the dump into a stream—which they named the Bloody Run Creek—and thus were carried near several factories and homes in the isolated neighborhood of College Heights. A recent report by a medical consulting firm has confirmed workers' worries about health hazards, finding "convincing evidence" that employees at factories near the landfill and the creek are "experiencing hazardous exposure to toxic and carcinogenic chemicals."

The local branch of the Nader-inspired Citizens Alliance and members of the College Heights Property Owners Association have asked to intervene in a lawsuit filed against Hooker in 1978 by the state and federal governments. Lewis Steele, a lawyer for both citizens groups, charges that government officials "seem to have negotiated away the tough standards demanded in the original claims" against Hooker—including demands that the company pay for long-awaited medical exams and, if necessary, permanent relocation of residents and workers in the contaminated area.

Milking the world's poor

Dave Lindorff, a frequent contributor to these pages who says he choked on his coffee when he saw the Nestle ad on his milk carton, files this report:

"The Nestle people may be crass and extraordinarily greedy in their continuing sales program of infant formula to Third World and poor American mothers, but they're also clever at what they do.

Two months ago, in an effort to counter the damage to their image and profits caused by a worldwide boycott of Nestle's food products (including Stouffer's frozen foods, Crosse and Blackwell jams and Deer Park Mountain spring water), the company embarked on a campaign to associate their name with the very product they've been depriving Third World babies of—milk.

Stores throughout New York City that sell Dairylea brand milk are offering a free half-gallon in exchange for purchase labels from Nabisco Oreo cookies and Nestle Quick chocolate powder. Nestle marketing strategists obviously hope New Yorkers will gradually forget the stories of how the company gives free two-week samples of powdered formula to new Third World mothers—just enough to get their own milk supply to dry up so they'll have to buy the costly stuff—and will instead think of Nestle as the 'free milk people.'

One problem with the campaign, however, is that the people who could really use a free half-gallon for their kids probably cut Oreos and Nestle Quick out of their food budgets long ago as inflation reduced the value of their Food Stamp allotments."

Keep it under your hats

Apropos of recent events, Yale professor Joel Schechter has been worrying about current threats to our president's safety—but from nuclear bombs rather than handguns:

"I read recently that in the event of nuclear war, President Reagan and his advisors could stay underground in shelters located at Fort Ritchie, Md., at Mount Weather (50 miles northwest of Washington, D.C.) and at Camp David. But a missile's direct hit at any of these locations would probably not be survived. Nor would the president escape if the enemy destroyed his airborne command post, which is scheduled to depart from Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland.

If the locations of these retreats continue to be publicized, as they were last month in *Parade* magazine (a nationally distributed Sunday newspaper supplement), enemy missile computers will know all four of the president's escape routes. He might then have to avoid the option of nuclear war because he could not survive it. Or perhaps he prefers death to the dishonor of peace. Only time, and continued widespread publication of all his escape plans, will tell."

—Josh Kornbluth



A broad coalition of some 1,400 activists protested rising unemployment last month in Des Moines, Iowa.

UAW drops old alliance, but calls for new actions

Discontent with Reagan programs and persistent unemployment may soon lead to large national demonstrations by labor-led coalitions, or even to work stoppages. Already local activities, including protests and the organization of unemployed councils, have sprouted up around the country, often bringing together the entire gamut of union, liberal and left constituencies along with religious leaders.

But one of the most promising of the major coalitions, the Progressive Alliance, initiated by United Auto Workers president Douglas Fraser in October 1978, was abandoned in a March 18 meeting of eight of its main union backers. Fraser wanted out of the leadership, which he had effectively set aside during the prolonged auto crisis, and the remaining union leaders could not agree on a new leadership or a common program.

At the UAW Community Action Program conference in Washington in mid-March, however, Fraser told delegates, "We've got to mobilize and we've got to have a demonstration in Washington not only of the UAW but of the total labor movement, if we can get their cooperation. Should it come to pass that we can see no movement at all, maybe just what we're going to do in every single factory under the jurisdiction of our union is just lay down our tools and just stop working until we get somebody's attention." Some UAW officials are discussing the possibility of a one- or two-day work stoppage—a significant escalation from the union's five-minute Big Oil protest.

AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland has shown some support for a national protest. At a Chicago press conference he said, "When the president claims that we do not represent our members, it's sort of inviting us to present him with a substantial number of our members."

Some local groups have already been demonstrating their sentiments:

- Around 1,400 people in Des Moines, Iowa—including active and laid-off workers from the

Food and Commercial Workers, AFSCME, UAW, Machinists, Rubber Workers and other unions, along with church, community and peace groups—protested on March 24 against growing unemployment (although still low in Iowa by national standards at 5.8 percent) and threats to benefits.

- Several job demonstrations have been staged in recent months in St. Louis, where the regional UAW and local unions have been forming unemployed councils that now include 1,200 people (still less than 10 percent of the UAW unemployed in the region, which has been hard-hit by shutdowns and cutbacks).

- An informal advocacy and support system for unemployed workers in Kokomo, Ind.—started in a UAW local but extended to workers laid off from other fields as well—is taking on a more formal structure. Besides participating in a recent rally against "industrial flight," the group organized UAW members to show up at a court eviction hearing for one member and succeeded in preventing the eviction.

—David Moberg

Renters talk, realtors walk

BERKELEY, CA—For the third time in its 12-year history, Berkeley's progressive coalition this month is reaching for the brass ring of electoral campaigns—control of city government.

Twice before, in 1973 and 1977, Berkeley Citizens Action (BCA) had a chance to elect a majority of the nine-member council. In each case a combination of internal bickering and statewide funding of anti-rent control candidates—still BCA's biggest obstacle—prevented the coalition from enacting programs that have sat on the shelf for more than a decade.

This time, despite Ronald Reagan's sweep in November, even wounded BCA veterans are cautiously optimistic.

"This will be the second local election since Reagan took office," says campaign manager Rich Schlackman. "Bernard Sanders, a socialist, won the first in Burlington, Vt. We think voters are beginning to react to the Reagan program nationwide, and electing progressives is one way of putting his victory in perspective."

But Schlackman is not relying on cross-country analogies or the projected mood of the voters on April 21. Despite an opposition campaign led once again by Berkeley's 4,500 landlords, there are lots of reasons to believe BCA can elect at least one candidate—all that they need for a council majority.

One of the coalition's main assets is a track record at city hall, thanks to BCA-elected Mayor Gus Newport and three BCA councilmembers who forged a working alliance with council independents. Through a combination of city-wide ballot and council action, BCA has implemented controls on rents, condominium conversion, eviction and housing demolition. "We now administer a program with direct economic effect on our political base—tenants," Schlackman says.

BCA also enters the April campaign with organizational unity that was painstakingly fashioned from the humiliating defeat in 1977. Its membership of 2,000 dues-paying activists, led by an elected steering committee, has helped elect Rep. Ron Dellums to six terms in office, as well as provide the political base for a state assemblyman, a county supervisor and many local officials.

Much of the coalition's present strength derives from the infusion of Alinsky-style organizing tactics after the 1977 defeat. Former BCA coordinator Mal Warwick harnessed the activity of Berkeley's many single-issue organizations into a dues-paying membership coalition. And he brought a new sophistication to the biennial election campaigns with the addition of polling techniques, computer sampling and the targeting of precincts for special mailings and candidate appearances.

But this year BCA also faces a bitterly determined cadre of 100 landlords doing precinct walking of their own. After losing three state and local ballot measures in a row, many landlords are angry, refusing to comply with the existing rent board and organizing a new and more militant group called the Berkeley Property Owners Association. But for tactical reasons, the landlord-supported slate this year says it is not opposed in principle to all rent controls—just to the existing rent law.

"We have forced the opposition to adopt some of our tactics," says BCA candidate Carole Selter Norris. "Because we registered hundreds of tenants who have not voted before, we shifted the balance of voting power in the city. Now both sides have to appeal to renters if they expect to win."

"The reality of rent control rather than its specter has aroused the landlords," Warwick adds. "The stakes are higher now—BCA is costing them money."

—Thomas Brom

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IN THE NATION

NUCLEAR POWER

Unions lead the Harrisburg march



By Harvey Wasserman

HARRISBURG, PA

MORE THAN 15,000 NUCLEAR opponents—thousands of them rank-and-file unionists—marched through the streets of Pennsylvania's state capital March 28 and marked a milestone in the growing alliance of the labor and anti-nuclear movements. Simultaneously, local residents escalated their economic warfare against the owners of the crippled Three Mile Island nuke.

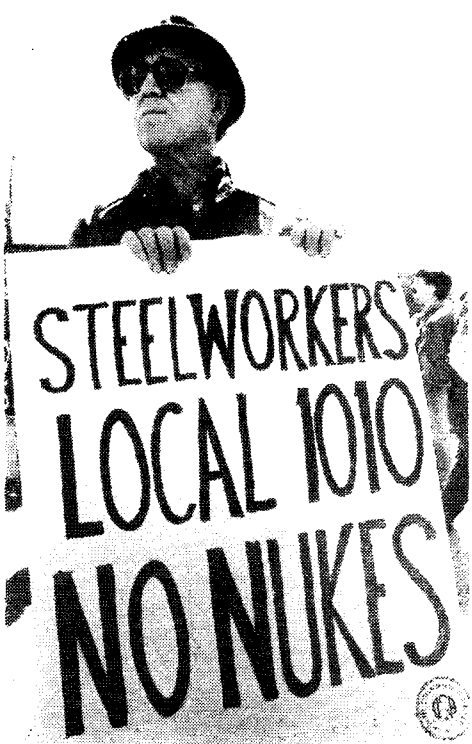
Sponsored by 11 international unions plus the National Education Association—representing overall some seven million workers and teachers—the march was the first labor-organized public rally against atomic power in the U.S. Banners from the United Mine Workers (UMW), Steelworkers, Service and Government Employees, Machinists and a host of other local and international unions dominated the head of the parade.

Anti-nuke alliances from as far away as California, Minnesota and the Carolinas joined those of nearby Newberry Township and other TMI "neighbors." It was an unseasonably warm spring day that inaugurated what CBS news termed the anti-nuke movement's "new look" of broad support from labor, feminist and minority groups.

"Our protection is our solidarity with each other," Jane Perkins told the crowd in an opening speech at the statehouse. "We thought our government would protect us, and that nothing could happen that could drive us from our homes. But during Three Mile Island we found out otherwise."

Perkins, a key march organizer, is coordinator of the Greater Harrisburg Labor Council, with 240 local unions in membership. "Our enemy is your enemy," she told the crowd. "The corporations lied when they said nuclear power was safe. They lied when they said it would save us money. They lied when they said it would create jobs. They lied when they said they knew what to do with radioactive wastes. Let us be firm in our resolve to continue this struggle until that plant is dismantled forever. Together we can keep TMI shut down."

Doing that may involve one of the most important confrontations now brewing on the American political scene. Though it will take years just to clean up the crippled TMI-2 reactor, TMI-1 was



apparently undamaged in the accident two years ago. Metropolitan Edison, owner of the plant, is desperate to get Unit One at least operating and back in the rate base. While the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and state Public Utilities Commission are now involved in hearings on that issue, some sources say technical problems alone could keep TMI-1 shut until January.

Going for the pocketbook.

Meanwhile, angry local residents have begun what could be lethal action against the badly strapped Met Ed's pocketbook. Some 320 Newberry Township residents have joined more than 60 ratepayers from other towns in refusing to pay their electric bills. The night before the rally the "Project David" organizers torched some \$50,000 in rejected March electric bills on the statehouse steps. "We got a

lot more support than we expected," said Pat Smith, a long-time TMI opponent. "We were shooting for just 5 percent of Newberry Township and instead we got 9 percent. We've encouraged people to refuse to pay until they get threatened with a shut-off, and then to demand a hearing in front of the PUC, and drag Met Ed out as long as they can."

Economics were also a key theme of the speech by William Esselstyn, UMW national secretary-treasurer, who was one of many speakers to attack the budget cuts of the Reagan administration. "Without the massive federal subsidies of the last three decades," he said, "nuclear power would never have gotten off the ground."

"If the billions poured from our national treasury into the pockets of nuclear power profiteers had gone for alternative power research, we would have long ago harnessed the sun, the wind and the tides. We would know how to extract coal safely and burn it cleanly."

Esselstyn was filling in for UMW president Sam Church, who was touring the coalfields to explain a tentative settlement for a new national contract. Thousands of coal miners throughout the east who might otherwise have attended the rally spent the day in their union halls debating the contract offer, which clearly reduced the size of the crowd.

Nonetheless, the UMW's official message was unmistakable. "Wake up, America," Esselstyn said. "Take warning from those of us who've already fought health and safety battles in our own industry. We've survived our disasters, but at the cost of 100,000 lives since the turn of the century. That may seem to be a staggering sum to many, but it's nothing compared to the hundreds of thousands who could be affected by one nuclear meltdown."

William Winpisinger of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) was also concerned about worker health. "We have about 25,000 members directly exposed to radioactive materials and their manufacture and processing in the shipbuilding and hardware industries. We have thousands more members who are indirectly exposed in the transportation and storage of radioactive materials. The incidence of cancer and leukemia among exposed workers is from two to two-and-a-half times greater than the incidence of cancer in the population at large. Make no mistake about it. The little magic pellets of radioactivity are the cancer connection in the workplace of America."

Winpisinger also hit hard at the jobs

theme. "We are told we need nuclear power because building nuclear power plants means jobs. Of course it means jobs. So do heroin, prostitution and advertising. Highway accidents and airline crashes provide jobs for ambulance drivers, tow truck operators, mechanics, body and fender people, doctors, hospital workers and funeral directors. But the Machinists Union doesn't tell people to go out and buy a plane crash or car wreck."

Feminist Bella Abzug told the crowd that the march marked both the anniversary of an accident and the end of the Reagan honeymoon. She urged students to act against university endowments, which are one of the main sources of capital for nuclear investment.

The deadly power of radiation was also underlined by Jane Lee, a farmer from nearby Etters who has been keeping records of animal mutations and reproductive problems in the area around TMI (*In These Times*, April 16, 1980). Lee lashed out at recent statistics purporting to show that the accident had "no effect" on local infant deaths.

Black activist James Farmer also delivered an emotional message. "I have seen your faces before," he said, "in the civil rights movement, in the marches for freedom and for employment. I have met with the descendants of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings," he added. "They live like a colony of lepers. Nobody wants their genes. What insanity, what greed would lead us to do the same thing to our own children?"

Farmer also said that a new dimension of racism had been added to American energy policy. "Uranium is coming from South Africa," he told the crowd. "During the coal strike several years ago, South African coal was being unloaded in Baltimore. Coal dug with slave labor was being used to compete with American coal. Will we free ourselves from OPEC by tying ourselves to South Africa?"

The day before the rally, a congressional committee, led by Rep. Morris Udall (D-Ariz.) toured TMI. Udall then met with local citizens and promised hearings. But he later told the media he thought TMI-1 should be re-opened.

Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) disagreed. "Yesterday I toured the crippled Three Mile Island reactor," he told the crowd. "I came away more convinced than ever that nuclear power is too dangerous a technology for our society. The private sector wants the profits from nuclear power...but they want you to pay the losses. We say no more bailouts of the nuclear industry."

Not all Harrisburg area citizens agreed. The day before the march, local building trades unions bought a full-page ad in the Harrisburg *Patriot* protesting that the rally did not represent the views of all of labor. But unlike the first anti-nuke labor meeting in Pittsburgh last fall (*In These Times*, Oct. 22, 1980), there were no pro-nuclear pickets in sight at Harrisburg. "The people here," said Markey, "are the body of labor."

Mike Olszanski of United Steelworkers Local 1010 in Indiana agreed. "In 1976," he told the crowd, "I stood in front of a meeting of my local union, Local 1010, and asked my membership to become the first big labor union to go on record against nuclear power plants. Was I scared? Believe it! That vote, after considerable debate, was unanimous. Never since that day have any of our 18,000 members given Local 1010's leadership cause to regret standing up for what we believed was right even when it wasn't popular."

Indeed, another breakthrough occurred when Don Schweitzer of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks announced to the rally that 14 railway unions representing a million workers had also added their support to the attempt to stop nuclear power and keep TMI shut.

"We've turned a real corner here," Olszanski said later in an interview. "This alliance is definitely off the ground. It feels great."

Harvey Wasserman is author of *Energy War* and co-author of *Killing Our Own*, a book on radiation victims to be published by Dell in 1982.



James Farmer reminded the crowd that South Africa is a major supplier of uranium.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Budget boys cripple OSHA

This is the third and final article in *These Times* correspondent Robert Howard's series on workers' health and safety.

By Robert Howard

WASHINGTON

IF PEG SEMINARIO'S OFFICE ON THE fifth floor of the AFL-CIO building here feels a little like a bunker under siege, it is probably because Seminario, an industrial hygienist at the Federation's Department of Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA), has the unenviable task of monitoring the rapid battery of changes that are transforming what is now Ronald Reagan's OSHA:

- On Feb. 10, newly appointed Secretary of Labor Raymond Donovan announced the withdrawal of a proposed OSHA standard giving workers the right to know what hazardous substances their employers are using in the workplace. Public hearings on the proposed standard scheduled for this summer were abruptly cancelled.

- On Feb. 17, President Reagan issued Executive Order 12291 establishing an elaborate administrative structure for the review of both proposed and current federal regulations and enshrining the principle of cost-benefit analysis as the cornerstone of administrative regulatory policy.

- On March 25, the interagency Task Force on Regulatory Relief, created by the Reagan executive order, announced the planned revocation of the OSHA final standard guaranteeing "walkaround pay" for all workers who participate in agency inspections, delays in the implementation of key features of OSHA's lead standard pending further review, and reconsideration of the OSHA "hearing conservation program" scheduled to

go into effect on April 15.

- And on March 27, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Thorne Auchter announced that OSHA had petitioned the Supreme Court to delay its ruling on the agency's cotton dust standard so that OSHA could review its financial impact on the textile industry in a test case for the application of cost-benefit analysis to health and safety regulations.

For Peg Seminario and other union activists, these and other administration decisions signal a major reversal in the 10-year-old federal government commitment to protecting workers' safety and health. "Their actions are raising a lot of concern and generating a lot of anger," says Seminario. "They are painting themselves very quickly as anti-worker and just not concerned about workers' health and safety at all."

Administration officials, of course, disagree. In testimony before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, OSHA director Auchter said that "President Reagan, Secretary Donovan and I all agree that an Occupational Safety and Health Act is necessary for the protection of American workers." But, Auchter continued, "the prevailing adversary spirit" at OSHA had made effective worker protection impossible. The administration's solution is to de-emphasize federal enforcement activities in favor of policies favoring labor-management cooperation, more efficient use of scarce resources (as determined by cost-benefit analysis), and a much expanded role for the states.

But this language of cooperation, decentralization and management efficiency is merely a smoke-screen hiding the real significance of the Reagan administration's plans. Over the next four years, health and safety regulation will

become more centralized rather than less—in the hands of a new class of health and safety bureaucrats, the economists and planners at David Stockman's Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Reagan's health and safety policies do not dismantle big government. Under the guise of protecting the public from selfish "special interests," they are insulating the health and safety regulatory process from participation by those workers whom it affects the most.

A few well-placed cuts.

For weeks, the massive Reagan budget cuts have been the center of attention in Washington. Looking at the numbers of the health and safety budget provides a first indication of the policies being fashioned by the new health and safety bureaucrats.

Surprisingly, OSHA's cuts are relatively mild. The proposed Reagan budget eliminates only \$3.7 million for the remainder of fiscal year 1981 and sets 1982 funding levels at \$221 million, a reduction of about 9 percent from the \$235.3 million in the original Carter budget. The agency's popular New Directions grant program escaped with minimal cuts. Funding for the current 150 grantees has been assured through 1982, and, while a new round of grants originally included in the Carter budget has been cancelled, \$150,000 has been set aside for three joint labor-management projects—reflecting the new administration's theme of cooperation.

But such cuts as there will be at OSHA are concentrated almost entirely in the important area of enforcement. According to administration plans, 260 staff positions will be eliminated over the next two years—100 compliance officers, the men and women who do OSHA workplace inspections, and 160 officials who monitor state health and safety plans. Given the already far from adequate number of OSHA inspectors, these cuts should seriously impair the agency's ability to respond to worker complaints. (One OSHA employee cynically described the new policy as "don't answer the phone.") And the reduction in state monitors means that state health and safety programs, the keystone of the administration's enforcement policy, will have a freer hand in determining just how stringently they apply the federal law.

Even more ominous are the severe cuts, totalling 30 percent, in the budget of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). NIOSH research provides the scientific foundation for new health and safety standards. Paring the agency budget so sharply compromises the standard-setting process. And despite the administration's goal of decentralization, the NIOSH training budget that funds the education of occupational safety and health professionals at schools of public health across the country has been reduced—from \$14 million to zero.

Moreover, if the Committee on Labor and Human Resources in the Republican-controlled Senate has its way, cuts in the health and safety budget could be even worse. At the urging of the Senate's youngest member, 32-year-old Don Nickles (a darling of the Moral Majority who has said that government agencies like OSHA subvert "individual freedom"), the Committee recommended an ill-conceived, across-the-board cut for the Department of Labor that would set FY'82 levels 20 percent below those for FY'81. When inflation is taken into account, this amounts to a real cut of 30 to 35 percent that, according to Peg Seminario, "could be very damaging for OSHA." The Senate Budget Committee will decide among these competing proposals this week.

But government policy consists of more than just numbers. When it comes to the officials who will set the priorities

and tone of health and safety policy-making, the Reagan record is even more distressing.

First, in a transition period marked by generalized ideological vindictiveness, the transfer of power in those agencies concerned with occupational safety and health has been especially harsh.

The summary dismissal of Dr. Anthony Robbins as director of NIOSH is the most dramatic example. On Monday, March 1, a U.S. Chamber of Commerce newsletter, *The Regulatory Action Network*, published a vitriolic attack on Robbins and his deputy director, John Froines. Branding them "social-activist officials" and "self-appointed champions of the working class," the article accused Robbins and Froines of politicizing NIOSH and "sabotaging [its] long-



Dr. Anthony Robbins was summarily dismissed as head of NIOSH.

term health research program" in order to further their "radical, anti-business" goals. Claiming that the two officials had "burrowed into the bureaucracy to avoid dismissal," the Chamber called for their removal. And two days later, in an act that the AFL-CIO termed "reminiscent of the red-baiting and anti-labor tactics of the 1950s," Robbins was fired by Secretary of Health and Human Services Richard Schweiker, stripped of his commission as assistant surgeon general in the Public Health Service, and given a day to clear out of his office.

The Robbins firing is only the most visible sign of a campaign to enforce a new political orthodoxy at both NIOSH and OSHA. OSHA director Auchter has ordered the destruction of 100,000 agency booklets about the hazards of cotton dust and withheld distribution of several agency films and slide shows about workers' health and safety rights, cotton dust and acrylonitrile (a vinyl compound) all on the grounds that they are pro-labor. Lawyers in OSHA's Office of the Solicitor have been informed that speaking to the press is grounds for dismissal. According to one agency employee, "People are beginning to censor themselves. I've even had fellow workers come into my office and say, 'You should take down your posters; they're too radical; they'll draw attention.'"

Nor do the Reagan administration appointees to key posts in the Department of Labor suggest even a mild concern for workers' health and safety rights. Raymond Donovan's alleged ties to labor racketeering schemes in New Jersey have received wide publicity. T. Timothy Ryan, the new Labor Department Solicitor and the department's representative to the Interagency Task Force on Regulatory Relief, is a member of the Francis T. Coleman law firm, which has been implicated in union-busting activities against the Graphic Arts International Union and is currently being investigated for violations of the Landrum-Griffin Act by Labor Department investigators.

And while the past of OSHA's new director, Thorne Auchter, appears to be considerably less checkered, the sole qualifications of the 36-year-old construction company executive from Jacksonville, Fla., are that, in 1972 and 1973, he served on the "Governor's Task Force on OSHA" in Florida and, from 1973 to



As head of the interagency task force on regulatory relief, James C. Miller III will have the first word on new OSHA policies.

1976, was a member of that state's "Workman's Compensation Advisory Council." Neither an advocate for strong health and safety protection nor an experienced health and safety professional, Auchter is likely to be little more than a messenger boy between the White House and the health and safety bureaucracy.

The transfer of power.

The most important government official for health and safety policy is not in the Labor Department at all. He is James C. Miller III who as OMB's administrator of information and regulatory affairs and executive director of the Task Force on Regulatory Relief has been dubbed the "regulatory czar" of the Reagan administration. The 39-year-old Miller,

The cost-benefit approach is to issue earplugs or respirators, not to clean up the plant.

who fought health and safety regulations when he served as an economic advisor to both presidents Nixon and Ford, heads a staff of some 70 employees who will be extensively scrutinizing both new and old regulations not only at OSHA but at all federal regulatory agencies.

Established by Executive Order 12291, the Task Force is at the center of a system for what a White House fact sheet terms the "centralized review" of all federal regulations. Every federal agency must submit a "Regulatory Impact Analysis" to OMB for each "major" regulation it proposes. Any conflicts between the agencies and OMB are to be resolved by the interagency Task Force. The heavy hand of OMB has already made itself felt in administration health and safety policy. It was the OMB that ordered Secretary Donovan to withdraw the OSHA right-to-know proposal. And OMB has been closely involved in the decision to revoke the walkaround pay standard.

The expanding role of the economists at OMB in the health and safety regulatory process is not exactly new. Since President Ford's executive order in 1973 mandating "economic impact statements" for new regulations, the influence of the White House planners has steadily grown. At first, these statements were merely one set of criteria among many. But when President Carter signed a "regulatory analysis" order of his own in 1978, economic considerations began to carry more and more weight. By the end of the Carter administration, the White House "Regulatory Analysis Review Group" not only reviewed new regulations but also participated in the setting of final standards. OSHA's controversial cotton dust standard, for example, was altered by White House economists before its final publication.

But while OMB economists have been involved in health and safety regulation for years, the Reagan administration changes inaugurate a qualitatively new phase. Peg Seminario explains how: "Before, OMB played a role, but it was one agency among many. The Department of Labor had the upper hand." During the Carter years in particular, Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall and OSHA director Eula Bingham fought hard for vigorous OSHA standards. "Now," Seminario continues, "it's clearly OMB that is in charge."

President Reagan's executive order gives wide-ranging powers to the director of OMB. He has the authority to determine which regulations qualify as major rules and can order a regulatory impact statement even when they do not. And while the interagency Task Force on Regulatory Relief is ostensibly the final arbiter for conflicts between the regulatory agencies and OMB, both the Task Force's executive director and most of its staff come from the Management and Budget office. "I wouldn't go so far as to call it an OMB veto," says assistant budget director Edwin L. Dale Jr., speak-

ing of the new order, "but it comes pretty close."

In short, the Reagan administration's attack on occupational safety and health does not stop at the roll-back of important standards. It includes the creation of a system for health and safety policy-making that will make it all the more difficult for workers and their unions to fight back. The labor movement's traditional route to influence on health and safety issues—through the Department of Labor—has lost much of its effectiveness because the department has lost its central policy-making role. "Even if we could develop a relationship with Auchter," says Peg Seminario, "what difference would it make? He doesn't have any power. We have a whole new ballgame in town with OMB playing a very major role."

And with a new game come new rules. Most importantly, the dominance of OMB over health and safety regulations signals a retreat from OSHA's 10-year commitment to engineering controls as the preferred method for eliminating workplace hazards. In place of the redesign of work will come a reliance on the panacea of the cost-benefit analysts, "personal protective equipment" such as respirators or earplugs—cumbersome for workers, demonstrably ineffective, but in the rarefied world of "costs" and "benefits," a good buy.

"The OMB economists have been pushing respirators for years," says Seminario. The key difference now is that they will be joined by the director of OSHA himself. In an interview with the *New York Times* on March 29, Thorne Auchter said, "I think that personal protective equipment is absolutely appropriate for furthering safety and health in the workplace. As to whether the devices are comfortable for employees, well, employers are asked to do things under the government's safety and health act and under OSHA regulations that are not always comfortable for them. Both employers and employees have a responsibility to comply."

When asked what labor can do to fight this shift in the burden of responsibility



Syd Harris

for health and safety protection from employers to workers, most unionists in Washington point to last year's struggle against the Schweiker Bill, an initiative that would have seriously weakened OSHA's enforcement powers. "People got angry because it was a direct threat, and they responded," says Peg Seminario. "It was a tough fight but it helped us organize. And you can expect to see people get just as angry now." But it is unlikely

that traditional lobbying practices designed for Congress and the Department of Labor will penetrate the well-insulated inner sanctum of the new health and safety bureaucrats at OMB. For that to happen, the upcoming fight to protect workers' health and safety will have to become part of something bigger than itself—the struggle for new forms of democratic participation both in the workplace and in government. ■

IN THESE TIMES

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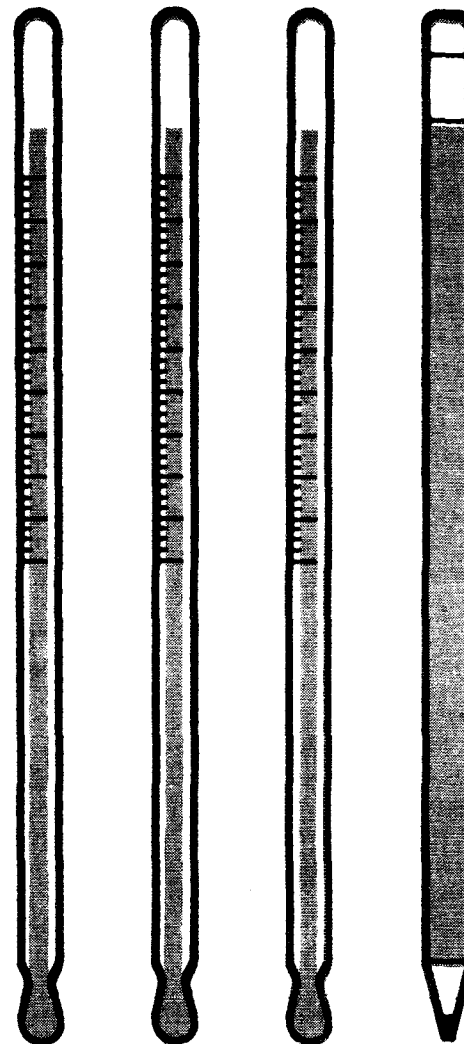
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IN THE WORLD

CENTRAL AMERICA

Mexico is an uncertain ally

By Harvey Levenstein

HAMILTON, ONTARIO

WHEN THE REAGAN administration announced the step-up in American military aid to the Salvadoran government in February, a hastily-convened meeting of all of Mexico's ambassadors to Central American countries reaffirmed Mexico's opposition to foreign interventions in the area. On the surface, it was a ringing reassertion of the strong stand that Mexico has taken in opposition to American policy in El Salvador. Yet the Salvadoran opposition has little ground for confidence that this strong stand will survive the critical months to come.

Mexico's anti-interventionist policy has deep historical roots. Ever since its own conservatives called on the French army to install an Austrian archduke to rule over it in the 1860s, Mexico's governments have proclaimed non-intervention in the internal affairs of other nations to be the hallmark of its foreign policy. Recurring attempts by the U.S. to influence the course of Mexican Revolution after 1910 and prevent the implementation of its Constitution of 1917 reinforced this sensitivity. So did the anti-Americanism that is endemic in many Mexican circles. Thus Mexico provided a haven and cover support for Augustin Sandino in the anti-American uprising in Nicaragua in 1928 and 1929. In 1932 it vigorously opposed the sending of American and Canadian gunboats to El Salvador when it was swept by the Communist-led uprising whose bloody suppression carved out the path that El Salvador has followed to this day.

Although it toed the American line in foreign policy for most of the '40s and '50s, in the '60s Mexico began again to assert an independent role. Standing on the principle of non-intervention, it refused to support the American suppression of the revolt in the Dominican Republic in 1965. And it was the only member of the Organization of American States to refuse to adhere to the American call to cut off economic and diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Since the '60s, when it began opening up relations with the various Communist countries and cultivating ties with the newly-independent countries of the Third World, Mexico has been fitfully disassociating itself from the American side in the Cold War. Thanks to its new oil fields it now sees itself as a powerful voice for the South in the North-South negotia-



Mexican demonstrators burned a flag outside the U.S. embassy on Jan. 22, 1981, to protest American intervention in El Salvador.

Despite its new-found oil, Mexico remains vulnerable to pressures from the U.S.

tions it is trying to promote. Recently, it has piqued the American government further by announcing plans for cooperation with Cuba in exploring Cuban waters for offshore oil. The exploration will involve equipment that the Mexicans have bought or leased from American companies, and will represent another large hole driven in the American economic blockade of Cuba.

This independent and barely-concealed anti-American line has considerable support in Mexico. Although it long ago lost most of its left-wing thrust, the governing political machine, the *Partido*

Revolucionario Institucional, still contains many people who sympathize with the left, especially when it is abroad. Any sign of independence from, or opposition to, the Americans appeals to an even wider audience. The widespread feeling that its immense oil reserves are now reversing Mexico's traditional vulnerability to American pressure adds to the confidence of those willing to challenge the Americans.

It's not that simple.

But the Salvadoran left would be foolish to expect too much from the Mexicans, for, as usual, all is never what it appears to be in that puzzling country.

As many Central Americans are aware, the U.S. is not the only country with historic hegemonic ambitions in the area. Ever since most of them split off from Mexico and Guatemala in the aftermath of the wars that brought independence from Spain they have regarded Mexico as their "Colossus of the North." Now, there are suspicions that it is vying with oil-rich Venezuela (which is supporting the junta in El Salvador) for dominance

of what it regards as its own backyard.

More serious in terms of the immediate prospects for the left in El Salvador are the indications that, like Mexico's policy toward Cuba in the '60s, its policy towards the Central American left is either uncoordinated or two-faced. In the '60s and '70s, while the Mexican foreign ministry proclaimed its refusal to go along with the American blockade of Cuba, Mexican security services were cooperating with the FBI and CIA in cutting off travel to Cuba by Latin American leftists, photographing and delaying travellers to Havana passing through Mexico City airport, furnishing passenger lists to the Americans, forbidding stopovers, and so on.

While Mexico has often provided the kind of haven for leftist opposition leaders in exile that it is providing for Salvadoran opposition leaders today, its ministry of the interior and its security services have also been harsh in their dealings with less prominent exiles, making it difficult for them to obtain employment and harassing them in a variety of ways. It is completely consistent with Mexico's record in this regard that at the same time as it has been providing a sounding board for prominent representatives of the Salvadoran opposition front it has also begun a major crackdown to stop the more humble refugees who are crossing Guatemala and coming across Mexico's southern border.

Perhaps most important, though, is that the Mexican government knows that its new-found oil has not really redressed the imbalance in its power vis-a-vis the U.S. to nearly the extent that the American and Mexican publics believe. Even if its exports of crude oil to the U.S. rise to the maximum planned level it will hardly be supplying 5 percent of the U.S.' needs. Not only would a cut-off of this supply be easily shrugged off, but the United States might retaliate with a cessation of imports of Mexican natural gas, which the States could replace easily, while the Mexicans would have nowhere else to sell it. Moreover, exports of agricultural produce to the U.S. and the maintenance of the agreement allowing the duty-free import of labor-intensive goods manufactured in their poor northern frontier zone are more important to the Mexicans than the American market for crude oil. It would be easy for the Reagan administration to heed the howls now coming from Florida agricultural interests opposing cheap Mexican imports and the protests of labor union regarding the flight of industry to the trans-border zone.

The Salvadoran opposition, then, has reason to be grateful to the Mexicans for their opposition to American intervention in El Salvador, but they would be foolhardy to count on it indefinitely. As long as the Mexicans remain vulnerable to American pressure, as they will for a long time, the many crosscurrents in Mexico's inscrutable political system will continue to operate, sabotaging or at least cancelling out the attempts to follow Mexico's traditional course of opposition to intervention in the internal affairs of the nations of the hemisphere.

Harvey Levenstein is a professor of history at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

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COMMUNISTS

Italians debate the lessons of Poland

By Diana Johnstone

R O M E

"DON'T ASK WHAT WE'LL do in case of Soviet military intervention in Poland. Ask what should be done to prevent it." The second question, said Giancarlo Pajetta, is the one the Italian Communist Party (PCI) has been trying to answer since Polish workers created their free union Solidarity. There is probably no political group in the West that feels it has as much at stake or is watching developments in Poland with more anxiety than the PCI. In speeches, articles and meetings, PCI leaders like Pajetta and scholars like Adriano Guerra of the Gramsci Institute have been doggedly insisting that Communists should welcome Solidarity as a great opportunity for "socialist renewal" of Poland's stagnant society. This message is obviously addressed first of all to the Polish Unified Workers Party (Communist Party) itself, as well as to other Warsaw Pact countries. There was thus a grain of truth in Vadim Zagladin's letter on behalf of all the old boys on the Soviet Communist Party central committee reprimanding the PCI for "recommendations and advice" to the Poles that could be "interpreted as PCI interference in Polish affairs."

The letter was written right after Zagladin's mission to Italy last December amid a flurry of public warnings by PCI leaders that external intervention to block Polish "renewal" would be "un-

acceptable." The PCI newspaper *Unita* greeted Zagladin with an announcement that "nothing could be more short-sighted than to stubbornly consider the search for a different kind of socialism as an attack on socialism" and said the Italian Communists were "very worried by every threat of armed intervention, and even think that the very brandishing of hypothetical intervention already amounts to an unacceptable limitation of sovereignty." The Russian letter, leaked to the press in February, retorted that the PCI was wrong in denying the influence of foreign anti-socialist forces on Polish events, and cited AFL-CIO aid to Solidarity as proof.

But with Gramscian "optimism of the will," the PCI has stuck to proclaiming the reasonableness of a happy ending in Poland. In the '70s, as Gierek tried to substitute a technical-scientific revolution for a political one, the Polish Party increasingly evolved from a "political force directing social life" to a "structure of administration." Opportunists and careerists poured in. Yet the Italians claim there are still "genuine Communists" in the PWUP ranks. The crisis provides an opportunity for them to restore the party to its role of political guide, especially since Lech Walesa and other Solidarity leaders keep asking the party and the government to make constructive proposals, to exercise leadership. Solidarity should be drawn into a democratic decision-making process, despite its understandable wariness of being reduced (like the old official unions) to a "transmission belt"—a tool for increasing productivity. What is needed is a "vast re-



Giancarlo Pajetta has urged Communists to embrace the Polish movement.

form of the political system."

But in practice, the Polish Party and government have offered no constructive proposals and have allowed the country to drift toward disaster. The view that the Party is still largely a political organization willing and able to engage in a political contest may prove overly optimistic. What is the role and power of the secret police? The PCI analysis is understandably discreet about this crucial factor, no doubt out of both tact and ignorance.

Italian labor has enthusiastically acclaimed Solidarity. The three confederations CGIL, CISL and UIL gave Lech Walesa a united greeting when he visited Rome, and top CGIL leader, Communist Luciano Lama, assured Walesa that "You can count on us."

While refusing to make threats and cau-

tioning that "alarmism is dangerous," Pajetta has warned the Russians that armed intervention would be "catastrophic" for detente and perhaps even for peace in Europe, without solving any of Poland's real problems. "It's no paradox to say that it gets to be hard to justify a policy of coexistence between countries that have different social systems and really serious conflicts, if a capacity for coexistence, collaboration and mutual respect is not demonstrated even toward one's own allies," Pajetta said in an interview with *Rinascita* last December. "In any case, an intervention in Poland would weaken the very possibility of winning people over to ideas of socialism, it would mean a loss of influence in the third world, it would give a terrible alibi to those who aim to encircle the

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POLAND

The showdown is postponed, for now

By David Ost

MADISON, WISC.

THE LATEST CRISIS IN POLAND, like all the previous ones of the last seven months, has now ended in an agreement—and not in a showdown. The government has promised punishment for those guilty of police brutality in Bydgoszcz, continued toleration of the farmers' union and the establishment of a joint panel with Solidarity to look into the problem of political prisoners. The union, in turn, promised to call off its general strike.

Many workers and farmers felt that last week's strike mobilization was the time to win some substantial reforms beyond the usual capitulations on immediate issues. A brilliantly executed four-hour strike had demonstrated anew the union's astonishing power and unity. It also demonstrated the success of Solidarity's alternative information network—strike preparation news, after all, wasn't publicized in the official press. Most people learned the details only through their national and local union bulletins. But then the strike was called off before the union's basic demands had been attained.

This is the first agreement Solidarity has signed that fails to grant even superficial reforms. It is a return to the pre-Bydgoszcz status quo, which is not a very desirable position for the union. Solidarity has let the government know that overt acts of oppression will bring on the strongest union response. But it is still



Poles fear Russian intervention less than a crackdown by their own government.

unable to force the kind of meaningful concessions that might begin to resolve Poland's permanent state of crisis. The showdown, it seems, has again only been postponed. The government constantly pleads for an end to the tension, while refusing to undertake seriously the measures that could bring this about. It clearly prefers a permanent state of crisis to a viable independent union movement.

There is a mistaken perception in the West that the Polish government has made numerous concessions since August. Self-professed supporters of Solidarity increasingly voice the concern that the union may be pressing "too far, too fast." To the Poles, this shows only that government propaganda has been more effective outside the country than inside. For what exactly has the union won? In the pre-Bydgoszcz days, which now reign once again, Solidarity is still denied effective access to the media and is excluded from policy making. The latest economic "reform" is now being introduced in the same unacceptable manner as in the past: by administrative fiat. While the news coverage in the West ends with the signing of an accord, Poles are more concerned with the accord's implementation. Solidarity is expected to wait quietly for the government to implement the many agreements it has signed, even while the government shows no interest in doing so.

The "90 days of calm" proclaimed by Premier Jaruzelski in February was supposed to inaugurate the transformation of society, or what the government calls "renewal." But even before Bydgoszcz, all the 90 days had brought was an increase in the random suppression of Solidarity activists. Solidarity had put out special leaflets, ignored in the press, publicizing the alarming rise in physical violence against union members. The guarded optimism of August and February was turning into the conclusion, feared all along, that the government in fact never had the intention of working with Solidarity. It seemed only to be waiting for the right time to move. And it was in this context that the Bydgoszcz beatings occurred on March 19.

Amid the non-stop talk in the western press of imminent Soviet invasion, it is worth noting that the Poles don't worry so much about the Soviets. This is not because they don't fear oppression, but because they fear a more immediate enemy. The feeling is that if there is to be an overt attack on Solidarity's existence, it will come from the Polish government.

One factor working against an overt policy of oppression is the Church. The Church's role today is more as an intermediary than as the guide for either side. Though Solidarity is a conspicuously Catholic organization, the Church only supports the union and certainly doesn't control it. The Church has consistently counseled moderation on both sides. But to many unionists, moderation has only led them to the present stalemate. The workers may continue to exercise what Daniel Singer has called "veto power," but they'd like some positive input as well. While the Church has managed to achieve some positive input at top levels, Solidarity still has not.

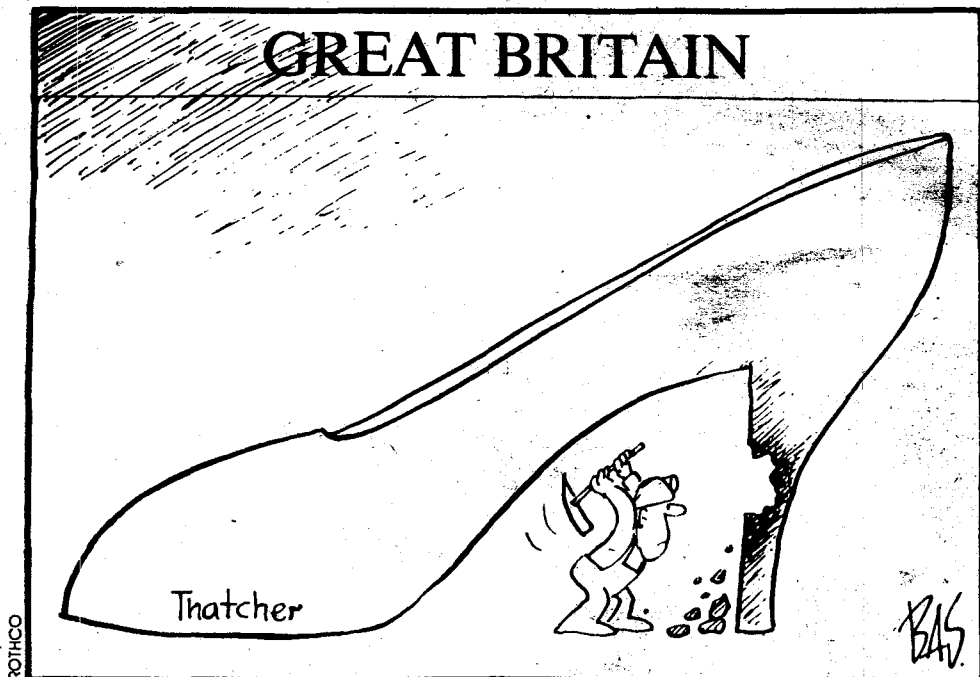
There have been great changes in Polish society. But these are the changes that come with a mobilized population determined to create something new. The changes are evident in the myriad uncensored union publications; in the lectures and meetings devoted to reclaiming Polish history, where no issues are excluded from debate; in the factories where everyone crowds around the Solidarity bulletin boards and where union meetings take on the character of truly democratic soviets.

These are exciting changes. But they continue only because Solidarity maintains its vigilance, not because of any "concessions" from above. Basically, the system works the same as it did before 1980. This can be missed from afar, but to Poles the continuity is unmistakable.

If the union were to let down its guard ever so slightly it would risk losing all of the ground it has won. And at this point, all it has won is some space to move. That is what Solidarity means when it insists that nothing really has changed. And that explains why someone warning the workers against pressing too far, too fast is normally viewed either as a fool or an enemy.

David Ost, who just returned from Poland, is a member of the Teaching Assistants Association Local 3220 at the University of Wisconsin.

GREAT BRITAIN



Miners set tone of union resistance

By Linda Larkin

NEW YORK

A NEW MOOD OF RESISTANCE to the policies of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government is spreading throughout Britain. It intensified perceptibly when the extremely deflationary and regressive new government budget was unveiled in mid-March. (A budget that the Trade Union Congress calculates will cut family income by an average of \$10 a week, add 2 percent to price inflation and raise unemployment to more than 12 percent.) But the new determination to fight Thatcher had already begun to pick up steam before the budget came out, thanks in large part to the militant action of Britain's union miners.

In late February the London *Times* ran a headline announcing that "Unions queue to test Thatcher resolve," encouraged no doubt by the fact that it took the miners only three days to frighten the Thatcher government into a humiliating and total retreat. The confrontation was precipitated by an announcement by the government's National Coal Board that 23 mines would be immediately shut down, and over the next five years as many as 50 more would be phased out—an implied loss of 30,000 jobs.

The strength, speed and unanimity of the miners' reaction was a shock to the government. While Joseph Gormley, the President of the National Union of Miners was counseling patience until an official strike vote could be taken (and threatening already striking Welsh miners), tens of thousands of miners were laying down tools and throwing up pick-

posed contract, its rulings were left intact. Critics claimed that the companies could easily give up the board now since everything's basically been decided," one official said. "Half your contract is written away."

Miners were also angry with a new 45-day probationary period before a new miner would be protected by the union. Although probationary periods exist in many industries, such a provision violates the coal miners' profound sense that once you go in the mine, you're either a company man or a union man—or woman. "My grandfather was a miner," Dave "Blue" Lamm said, "and he told me back when he was a union president they wouldn't let a man be in the drift mouth [mine opening] without taking his obligations." Miner Darryl Gillespie warned Church: "When you give the power of judgment to the employer, they can take and use it as they want. If the new man shows himself to be a good union man in the first 45 days, I guarantee you the word 'discretion' will come up and that man will be discharged."

And a host of technicalities.

Although the leasing and subcontracting issues, the royalty payments on non-union coal and the probation period were the most widely mentioned objections, critics found other weaknesses. New technicalities might weaken the right of miners to refuse unsafe work. Production of coal on holidays could be a "foot in the door" for Sunday work. A two-year limit on recall rights after layoff seemed to some like a further means of eliminating union members. Also, an agreement to discuss company-by-company pension plans looked to many like the beginning of the end of the industry-wide retirement plan created by John L. Lewis.

Despite Church's reassuring words on the insignificance of the royalties on non-union coal for these pension plans, an official union bargaining bulletin that was written just before the contract suddenly was signed warned that "if BCOA companies were allowed to shirk pay-

ets. The strike spread quickly and included many traditionally moderate coal fields. By Tuesday, Feb. 16, about 30,000 miners were out, and it was clear that within a very short time virtually all of Britain's 230,000 miners would be on strike. The National Coal Board hurriedly announced that it had withdrawn the list of 23 immediate mine closures—a complete victory for the mineworkers.

The unilateral announcement of mine closures by the Coal Board completely contravened the National Coal Plan agreement made with the miners' union in 1974, after the last Conservative government of Edward Heath was toppled by a miners strike. Under the '74 agreement machinery had been established so that the government and the union could secure a so-called orderly phasing out of mines that both parties agreed had been exhausted. Forty mines have been closed down through this procedure over the last seven years.

Yet the coal industry in Britain is not a dying industry—in fact quite the opposite. Its long-term prospects are considered very good, given estimates of British energy needs over the remainder of the century. If there has been any problem for British coal it is rather that production has been too low to satisfy domestic energy needs. Coal imports (about 5 percent of the market) are needed to fill the shortfall in domestic production.

Billions of dollars have been invested in the coal industry during the last few years to modernize the industry and boost production. Additionally, as part of the 1974 agreement, the miners union consented to certain productivity concessions in exchange for employment guarantees. Labor-management relations have been reasonably good since the 1974 strike and absenteeism has dropped by 3 percent.

As a result recent productivity gains in the coal industry have been impressive—a 3 percent rise last year compared to a 2 percent drop for all of British industry. In 1979 coal production rose for the first time in 15 years and a further increase took place last year. The proportion of the domestic energy market supplied by

coal and coal products has also been rising in recent years, giving some evidence of the industry's continuing viability.

Thus, over the last few years, the British coal industry has been rationalizing, economical units have been phased out and it has been modernizing through massive injections of funds. Coal has outperformed most other industrial sectors and remained cost-competitive both with imports (but for the massive overvaluation of the British currency) and with other domestic energy sources.

In other words, all the familiar buzzwords that employers use to justify wage cuts and plant closures did not apply in this case. But that did not prevent a massive attack on jobs.

What went wrong was that Britain fell into a severe economic depression as a direct result of the economic policies of the Thatcher government. The Thatcher depression has meant that domestic demand for coal has fallen sharply and coal stocks are accumulating to record levels. Companies strapped for cash cannot now afford the cost of converting from oil to coal-burning furnaces, and an overvalued exchange rate has frustrated efforts to increase exports of coal. With no upturn in coal demand in sight, the National Coal Board decided to cut production by unilaterally closing mines.

But more was at stake than economics. The pattern of mine closures announced by the Board made it clear that the Thatcher government was trying to intimidate and divide the union; the first round of announced closings were targeted to the most militant coal fields, while mines in more moderate areas that would be obvious candidates for shutdown on economic criteria alone were left largely untouched.

Given the mineworkers' militant history, the government, no doubt, saw an opportunity to demonstrate to British workers that they were invincible to the kind of labor action that ousted Heath. But they badly miscalculated the situation and it may prove their undoing. The lesson that other unions have learned from the miners' victory is that Thatcherism is vulnerable to militant action. ■

Coal

Continued from page 3

when linked to the abandonment of the requirement that companies pay royalty on non-union coal. Church defended the move, which was presented as a trade-off for the widows' pension, on the grounds that the companies had paid in only \$52 million in 17 years. Besides, Church said, many companies were either refusing to pay or avoiding paying by arranging purchases through other subsidiaries.

But Fred Decker, an elected organizer in the Beckley district, strongly disagreed: "If we ratify this we'd be promoting non-union coal. The royalty is not in itself the real big issue. It is more a deterrent than a source of revenue. If we take it off, it will encourage the little mom and pop mines with eight or 10 workers to take off." Such mines are usually non-union and much more dangerous. Trumka notes, "The proof that this [deterrent] worked is the small amount of royalties collected."

On leaving the Beckley meeting, Church accused dissident miners of having "the theory of the shotgun behind the door. These men at the big mines are not going to let little doghole mines come in and chase them out." But Decker said, "The worst part about this contract is not what you see. It's what you don't see. Miners will try to stop non-union coal from going through, but the only alternative is to wildcat, and that's illegal under ARB 108. Really, you don't have a damn leg to stand on."

"ARB" refers to the Arbitration Review Board set up in the last contract. In the last few years, it has "rewritten the contract" with nearly 200 decisions, including a draconian prohibition on even talking about a wildcat strike and elimination of all "past practices" and customs not written down. Although the Board itself was eliminated in the pro-



Sam Church failed to sell the contract in the fields.

ments into the fund from non-signatory coal profits, the funds would become strapped for cash and at the end of the life of any new contract might be in enough financial trouble to make it easier for BCOA to ram through a company-by-company pension plan." The big coal companies and their new oil owners object to carrying the burden of pensions for the thousands of old miners displaced by mechanization whose former employers no longer exist.

A matter of integrity.

In exchange for a not-so-terrible but not-so-great wage and benefit package, the contract gave up fundamental union protection and principles. Miners thought too much of their union to accept the trade. "I got false teeth," one old miner shouted in a meeting as he pulled out his dentures and waved them in the air. "I bought these without a dental plan and I'll buy another pair without a dental plan to keep my union." The irony is that with productivity now increasing 8 percent per year in the eastern mines and coal prices likely to jump, the companies would have been able to absorb the costs of the contract easily.

Church appears to have let his own deadlines, as well as his desire to show the companies that he could deliver "la-

bor stability" in exchange for money, push him into a bad settlement. With the votes of the international officers, a few officials under pressure, and a bloc of district officials whose regions are financially subsidized by the international, Church got the contract through the bargaining council. He was obviously insensitive to the issues uppermost in the minds of miners and too willing to adopt the BCOA vision of what will benefit miners. "You can be generous and say Church felt the union would be hurt by a long strike," coal writer Curtis Seltzer said, "or you can be less generous and say Church has consistently been a company-oriented unionist."

Church may also have believed that the companies simply wouldn't give any more. Their reaction to the contract vote was a tough statement that they had "no plans to resume negotiations." They had some harsh words for Church, citing "disturbing lack of bargaining discipline in the UMW that puts the integrity of the bargaining process in serious jeopardy."

But the miners insisted on the integrity of their union. "This vote showed that miners aren't dummies," one jubilant official said. "The most dangerous thing the coal companies can face is intelligent miners." The danger is compounded by their deep historical and personal feeling for their union.

"People are going to say, 'Look at those greedy miners. They want everything,'" Fred Decker reflected. "But the economic issue is not the issue. The issue is the existence of this organization. I can't forget the people who died at Ludlow or the cold and hungry nights at Cabin Creek or in Mingo County and Logan County. I'm not ready to throw in the towel and say our forefathers won it from the companies, but I'm going to give it back. Sitting in my hotel room the night I heard about dropping the royalties on non-union coal, I could see how those stockholders felt in 1929, but this was not the crash of the stock market. It was the crash of the United Mine Workers. ■

GED UP



Where midwives have practiced for some time they have chalked up an impressive record of problem-free births.

itors in "virtually all our labor patients" by saying that giving Oxytocin and epidural anesthesia in themselves transformed low-risk births into high-risk ones.

This curious self-justification, together with the contempt the OB/GYN profession has harbored for women for over a century, has fueled the women's health movement, which at about the time fetal monitors entered the scene began criticizing many of the mechanisms and chemicals that besiege the labor process.

The women's health movement has been important especially for the idea that one's health has to do with social relationships as much as with a laundry list of symptoms attaching to random organs. It has allied itself with the midwife—the original human form of the fetal monitor—because it contends that midwives treat women in childbirth as whole people, not as patients suffering from various uterine and hormonal disabilities. In its turn the OB/GYN establishment has attacked the drive to make midwifery widespread, charging that midwives working on their own aren't as safe as physicians. But there is much evidence to show that in most cases a constant human presence with educated compassion is worth at least as much as the shiniest arsenal of equipment. The North Central Bronx Hospital, which is in one of the poorest communities in the country with 30 percent of its largely black and Hispanic mothers at high risk, uses midwives in all its deliveries. In 1979 it toted up the following record: 88 percent of the deliveries were normal, vaginal ones. Anesthesia and analgesics were used in less than 30 percent of all labors. Oxytocin and other labor inducers were used in only 3 percent of the la-

bors, and only when there was a medical indication for them. Eight-five percent of the women gave birth in a semi-sitting position without stirrups. Some 98.3 percent of the infants were normal at birth. Elsewhere in the country midwives have practiced systematically and over periods of time in poor communities with similar results.

The poverty of health.

One anti-midwifery contention is that midwives can't change poverty, the source of most infant mortalities in the country. The health movement in general rejoins with an argument for prevention: short of eliminating poverty (an achievement only revolutions can boast), the poor *can* influence birth to some extent. Smoking, for instance increases by 30 percent or more any pregnant woman's chances of having a miscarriage or a stillbirth. According to Dr. David Rush, associate professor of public health and pediatrics in the faculty of medicine at Columbia University, smoking also has long-term developmental consequences—five to six month delays in reading and math at the age of 10 and increased hyperactivity in children. As to heavy drinking (two ounces or more of hard liquor a day), it was established in Sweden that 13 to 15 percent of all cases of cerebral palsy and mental retardation were linked to alcohol abuse.

Nutrition is a stickier issue. If your mother lived out her life in Appalachia and you do too, you may not be as likely to get the daily balanced ration of veggies, bean curd and other goodies that the sprout and earth-boots crowd in Berkeley does. But if by chance you manage to get better than Coca-Cola

and Fritos, the diet may make no more than the difference of an ounce or two in your baby's weight.

On the other hand, a Massachusetts study established in 1980 that when nutrition programs *are* offered to the poor, birth patterns can change noticeably. Evaluating Massachusetts' experience of the Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), established in 1972, the study found that the program resulted in a decrease in the number of low-birthweight babies, reduced infant mortality and increased gestational age. It also found that mothers at highest risk—teenagers and the poor—benefited especially.

Recently President Reagan announced a 30 percent cutback for WIC. If Dr. Rush is right, the program didn't matter much anyhow. But knowing this will be only wanly comforting, because the cutback here goes along with cutbacks everywhere in social services for everyone from newborns to the elderly.

The cycle of wretchedness.

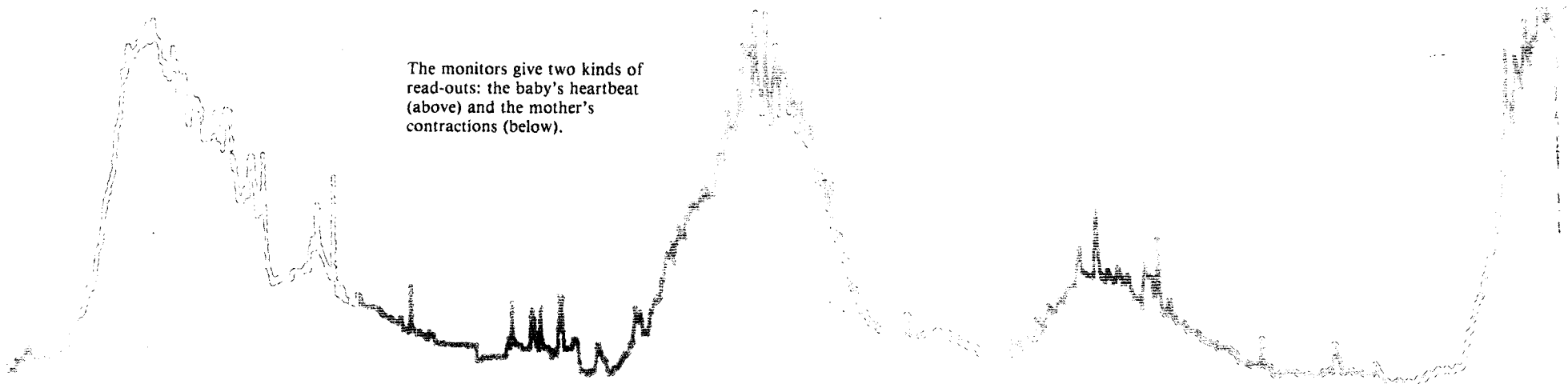
The peculiar mix of thrift, narrow-mindedness and mean-spiritedness that characterizes the current regime is also bringing us closer to "human life" legislation that may abolish not only abortion but contraception, too. This may mean a blip upward on the current baby boom graph, with more misery for women. And it would sharpen a further irony about birth technology, which gets noted in another Office of Technology Assessment study of intensive care units for the newborn. Unlike fetal monitors, these units—which have all the lifesaving apparatus that adult intensive care units do, scaled down to mini-size—do save lives. But while they

salvage some for normal futures they also save others for future membership in the ranks of "the handicapped." The babies who go to neonatal intensive care units are usually the tiniest ones, weighing below five pounds. Low birthweight is frequently linked to future learning disabilities, mental retardation, cerebral palsy and the like. Thus out of the paradoxes of hard times may come more wretchedness to employ the technologies that are fed by wretchedness.

But all of the foregoing may be largely academic speculation. Articles have begun appearing in medical journals as well as the daily press on potential cutbacks in funds for medical technology. More may be becoming less. This won't necessarily mean that fetal monitors will vanish and midwives will take their place. The medical profession has been battling the midwifery movement since it began, and it will continue doing so, no doubt, even in the midst of staff shortages like the ones that sparked last month's doctors' and residents' strike in New York City. But it could also be that the voices of people who have been rethinking health in its human as well as its technological connections will get louder and clearer now. Such are the contradictions of troubled times that even from the heart of disaster, rationality and compassion can come. ■

Ellen Cantarow, a columnist for the Cambridge Real Paper and author of Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change, is now attending the Boston School of Public Health. Members of the Health Policy Advisory Center assisted in the research for this series. Contact them at Health/PAC, 17 Murray St., New York, NY.

The monitors give two kinds of read-outs: the baby's heartbeat (above) and the mother's contractions (below).



EDITORIAL

Reagan would spend us into the grave

Despite his repeated warnings about the inflationary effect of the growing government deficit (now at \$950 billion) and about the effect on interest rates and taxes of what he calls "wild and irresponsible spending," President Reagan is planning to increase the federal deficit with the most inflationary and unnecessary spending of all—a vast increase in military spending. In a speech to building and construction trades unions a few moments before he was shot, Reagan correctly observed that "when we do not have economic security at home, our national security is threatened." But in a wild and irresponsible non-sequitor, he went on to say that "we have let our defense spending fall behind, and our capability to defend ourselves against foreign aggressors is not what it should be." Perhaps not. But if it isn't, the reasons are to be found in his first observation, not in any imagined attenuation of American military might.

There are, of course, two questions to be asked about spending for armaments. The first, and more important, one is whether or not such spending is really necessary to defend this country from external threats. The second is what impact military spending will have on the problems facing our society—inflation, unemployment and the steady deterioration of social necessities such as housing, education, transportation and health care.

The rationale of the Reagan administration for its tax cutting and social service cutback proposals is that if more money is allowed to remain in the hands of the wealthy, they will invest in productive enterprise and be motivated to modernize American industry. This process allegedly would reduce unemployment and lower the cost of goods by reducing the amount of labor required for each unit of production. And as inflation and unemployment decline, more people would be able to pay for social services.

There are many things wrong with this "theory," but the fundamental one is that even if the money saved by the wealthy were invested in new or modernized plant and equipment—and in fact most surplus capital is not used that way—the new technology that would increase productivity would also employ much less labor, and would result in massive layoffs.

But even if there were a small increase in employment in manufacturing industries, that would not solve the problems of health care, low-cost housing, education or transportation because none of these industries is sufficiently profitable, if at all, to attract private money. In a highly technological society like ours these must be public services, or they will continue to deteriorate, and the quality of our society along with them.

The massive transfer of public monies from these services to the military spending that Reagan advocates will only accelerate the decline of American civilization. And the size of Reagan's proposed transfers is enormous. From 1981 to 1986 Reagan proposes doubling annual military spending—from \$171 billion to \$368 billion. In the next five years, if the Reagan team has its way, \$146 trillion will be spent on armaments. In the language of our president, this amounts to a stack of \$100 bills 1,035 miles high.

Guns and more guns.

But even these immense increases understate the Reagan budget's commitment to defense expenditures. Reagan's military spending is concentrated in the procurement of new weapons, but the budget underestimates the costs necessary to deploy and maintain them. The proposal to increase the number of naval ships from

450 to 600, for example, does not adequately account for the additional 100,000 to 150,000 sailors that would be required to put the vessels out to sea. Either Navy expenditures will have to increase even more or we will confront an aggravation of the current situation in which many ships are languishing in port for lack of 20,000 petty officers.

The taxes that will be levied on Americans to finance the armaments buildup are staggering. Already in 1981, military expenditures cost an average of more than \$2,000 for every American family. By 1986, American families will be paying an average of \$4,800 for military programs.

Moreover, Reagan's combination of increased expenditures and tax cuts will transform the social role of the federal government, which more than ever will serve as a financier for the armaments industry rather than as a dispenser of services needed by Americans. Excluding social security—which the Johnson administration first added to the budget to conceal the acceleration of military expenditures during the Vietnam war—military expenditures accounted for 38 percent of the federal budget for fiscal year 1981. Outlays for everything else but national debt comprised 46 percent.



His military budget will speed the decline of the U.S. as a humane society.

Reagan projects for 1986 an increase of military spending to 62 percent of the budget. The share of all other expenditures, excluding the national debt, will shrink to 27 percent.

The current military buildup is reminiscent of the Vietnam era when the Johnson administration heated up inflation by trying to provide both guns and butter. Indications of the inflationary impact of Reagan's proposals are already appearing. According to the *New York Times*, "For the last few months, the nation's purchasing managers have reported that supplies of aluminum, electric motors, castings and other defense-related materials have been growing perceptibly tighter while their prices have been rising more sharply than other industrial materials." The effects of the growth of military spending will most likely overheat the sensitive markets for industrial materials and skilled labor and nullify whatever deflationary impact the Reagan budget cuts might otherwise have.

Because military expenditures provide

jobs primarily to scarce, highly skilled technicians, they will not reduce unemployment. Quite the contrary. Because resources are shifted away from more labor absorbing alternatives, defense spending actually aggravates unemployment. A study done by the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers in 1979 found that at the \$78 billion level, military spending cost 3.25 million civilian industrial and service jobs.

The increase in military spending will also almost certainly contribute to the decline of the United States' position in the world economy. The same IAM study observed that more than half of American scientists and engineers have been work-



CIA estimates, which are consistently biased toward overstating Soviet expenditures and power. Even if we ignore CIA deception on dollar estimates, however, Reagan and his cold warriors mistakenly assume that increases in military spending bring proportionate increases in military effectiveness. In fact, the superiority of American military technology has made it far less expensive for the U.S. to modernize its strategic weapons systems. To improve the accuracy of the delivery systems of their strategic nuclear warheads the Soviets have had to introduce a whole new generation of ICBMs, while the U.S., by merely improving its guidance systems and by introducing the MK-12A warhead, has achieved the same result at one-sixth the cost. And while the Soviets developed Backfire bombers and new SS-20 missiles to increase the power of their nuclear theater weapons, Jimmy Carter was able to attain more effective penetration of Soviet defenses with cruise missiles launched from existing B-52s.

With the introduction of both air and ground cruise missiles and Pershing II missiles, the U.S. can now reach every major Soviet target west of the Urals with its theater nuclear weapons as well as with its ICBMs. The range of Soviet theater weapons extends only to Western Europe.

The world balance of power.

In addition to the greater cost-effectiveness of U.S. military expenditures, Reagan and Weinberger's description of the Soviet military buildup also disregards the fact that the U.S. and the Soviet Union are not the only two players in the arms race game. The expenditures of U.S. and Soviet allies should also be taken into account. According to the Center for Defense Information, the Warsaw Pact spent \$175 billion in 1979. NATO spent \$215 billion. China's military spending adds another \$50 billion to make an anti-Soviet total of \$265 billion. NATO and China also hold a considerable advantage over the Soviet Union and its allies in terms of military personnel (9.5 million to 4.8 million), strategic nuclear weapons (10,500 to 6,000) and major surface ships (445 to 235).

In view of the Warsaw Pact's decided military inferiority, Soviet military spending increases can be regarded as an attempt to keep up in a hostile environment rather than as an aggressive attempt to gain military superiority. Confronted with growing shortages of trained labor and sluggish technological progress—productivity in the Soviet Union has increased at an annual rate of only 2 percent a year in the last decade—the Soviet government can maintain its high levels of military expenditures only by retarding the country's economic development and depressing the Soviet people's welfare. Perhaps this is why at last month's Soviet Communist Party Conference Brezhnev expressed his willingness to resume negotiation on the limitation and reduction of strategic armaments and proposed a summit meeting with Reagan.

In the light of all this, Reagan's military spending proposals can only bring disaster to the American people. If the new arms are used, civilization as we know it will end. If they are not used, the program of spending on arms instead of for public need will accelerate the decline of the United States as a democratic and humane society—and as a leader of the world community of nations. The mood in the Congress is such that there seems little prospect of blocking Reagan's program. But if it is not blocked it must soon be reversed or the United States will suffer the fate of earlier empires. ■

ing on military and space contracts. And thus have not been "available to work on civilian commercial designs and applications of new technology." This is one reason why the growth of productivity in the U.S. is far below Japan and West Germany, which have small military budgets.

A bit of deception.

President Reagan and Secretary of State Alexander Haig justify their military spending proposals as necessary to confront Soviet military power. Because the Soviet Union does not directly threaten the U.S., however, they have revived the old devil theory, under which every indigenous revolutionary movement is planned and orchestrated in Moscow. (See editorial, March 18.) The real danger to American corporate hegemony in the Third World comes not from the Soviet Union but from the people of the Third World. But the American people would not buy an argument that we need more guns in order to put down the democratic aspirations of oppressed peoples throughout the world—so Reagan hypes the Soviet military threat. "Since 1970," he said in his Feb. 18 budget message, "the Soviet Union has invested \$300 billion more in its military forces than we have." And Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger adds that the "dollar cost of the Soviet military effort" is "approximately 50 percent larger than ours. It has been larger than ours. It has been larger than ours for more than a decade."

But Weinberger's figures are based on

EUROPE

Spain's weak democracy is still in peril

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

SPANISH DEMOCRACY MAY WELL be the first major casualty of the Reagan administration. This is not to say that Ronald Reagan or even General Haig prefers a military dictatorship to the present constitutional set-up in Madrid. The Spanish military right is notoriously indigenous, and is certainly not waiting for inspiration from the CIA. But the attitude and priorities of those in power in Washington are important factors in the decision of potential putschists, and it is obvious that those factors have never been so favorable to the generals who want to sweep away this political rubbish and restore Francoist order.

Haig has announced that the fight against "terrorism" must take precedence over concerns for human rights. That is precisely the viewpoint of the putschist generals.

However it was intended, the Reagan administration's cautious reaction to the attempted putsch on Feb. 23, stressing that it was an internal Spanish matter, was widely interpreted as giving *carte blanche* to the military to try again. Washington does not show such indifference to the prospect of elected communists sharing in government as it did to the prospect of military officers ending elected government altogether.

This would not matter if Spanish democracy were strong. But it is extremely weak, and its chances of survival are slight without support from Western democracies. Such support seems sadly lacking.

Juan Carlos has warned Spain's democratic political leaders not to count on him to be able to stop the next *coup d'état* as he stopped the last one. His government has sent urgent messages to West European capitals that it needs a political victory to survive, and that Spain's admission to the Common Market may be the only way to save Spanish democracy. Germany was willing to set a calendar leading to Spanish entry in 1984, but France was apparently sticking to its insistence that the European Economic Community solve its budgetary problems before continuing negotiations with Spain.

Then there is NATO. In an interview with *La Repubblica*, Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) leader Felipe Gonzalez said he absolutely disagreed with those who claimed that Spain's entrance into NATO would constitute some sort of guarantee of democracy. "There are plenty of examples to prove the exact opposite. Salazar's dictatorship in Portugal, or that of the Greek colonels or the Turkish military have all been perfectly compatible, it seems, with membership in the Atlantic alliance," Gonzalez said. "It remains to be seen what the military alliances are really all about. As I see it, they are being purged of all ideological meaning. The Warsaw Pact was supposed to be set up to defend the people's democracies. In reality it has served to defend totalitarian methods of exercising power, and it's no accident that it was used to crush the popular will in Czechoslovakia, and threatens to do the same eventually in Poland. The same goes for NATO."

The Spanish left's reluctance to join NATO is shared by part of the governing Union of the Democratic Center (UCD). Therefore, without receiving any direct encouragement from the Pentagon Spanish officers can figure that Washington could be easily consoled for the death of Spanish democracy by a greater loyalty to the Atlantic alliance than any elected government could provide. This is particularly important at a time when the U.S. is intent on extending NATO's range into the Third World and the Middle East.

The UCD government of former prime



LA DEMOCRACIA

The massive demonstrations against the attempted coup did not happen until several days later.

minister Adolfo Suarez attempted to use such assets as the Spanish language and traditional good relations with the Arab world to build independent bridges to the Third World. The Suarez government gave generous support to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, and considered setting up a Centrist International to rival the Socialist and Christian Democratic Internationals in Latin America, which would mean contending with West Germany and the U.S. for influence in Central and South America. Last September, Suarez postponed a visit to Ecuador, Colombia and Nicaragua, reportedly under pressure from Bonn and Washington. This budding rivalry also reportedly moved Bonn to oppose Spanish presidency of the UN General Assembly favored by Arab, African and Latin American countries.

A right-wing military regime might feel it could find a more profitable international role as sub-imperialist in the world order conceived by Haig. Thus in terms of international support, the Francoist putschists may feel they are in a stronger position than the democratic system they nearly extinguished on the night of Feb. 23.

The internal relationship of forces is even more alarming, and there are many signs that Feb. 23 will turn out to have been a dress rehearsal for the real thing. Colonel Antonio Tejero, General Jaime

Milans del Bosch and the other officers arrested after the putsch failed received a stream of admiring visitors in the barracks where they were confined and treated with utmost deference. Far from repentant, their morale was reportedly high, even triumphant. The arrested officers were reportedly taking the line that the King had known about the coup and encouraged it, only to betray them at the last minute. This lays the stage for the next coup to be against Juan Carlos himself.

The self-propagating right.

The mysterious "Almendros," who signed articles in the rightist military paper *El Alcazar* inciting to a *golpe*, turned out to be a collective of at least 500 men, mostly military. *El Pais* reported that the conspirators largely coincided with veterans of the Presidential Documentation Service, an intelligence agency run by Franco's heir apparent Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco before he was blown up by terrorists in 1973. But their passive supporters seemingly amounted to most of the armed forces.

In March 1976, nine officers were convicted of sedition for having founded, the year before, a Democratic Military Union with the aim of promoting democratic values in the armed forces. Interviewed by a Paris daily after the Feb. 23

events, one of those officers described three generations of officers in the Spanish armed forces. The oldest, veterans of the civil war, are Franco's men who in the first years of the fascist regime indoctrinated military cadets with their ideology. In the 1960s the regime was so well established that ideological indoctrination was somewhat neglected, producing a certain number of relatively democratic young officers. Towards the end of the old regime, under the guidance of Carrero Blanco, fascist indoctrination was revived in the military academies. "At present," the officer said, "the fascists are concentrated at the top and the bottom of the military hierarchy." Thus there is little hope of getting rid of Francoism by letting nature take its course. Spanish fascism is reproducing itself.

The democratic officer said a full-scale overhaul of the army and police was needed, including democratic education in the barracks, a weeding out of officers who don't accept the democratic system and abolition of the powerful "captain generals" who command whole regions and can always take over the nation, as they nearly did last Feb. 23.

But no party dares propose such reforms at this time.

Instead, the left parties, Socialist (PS-

Continued on page 22

Gonzalez warns of a new psychology



Felipe Gonzalez

Diana Johnstone spoke briefly with Felipe Gonzalez, leader of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) in Paris on March 20, 1981.

Do you think the present orientation of the Reagan administration risks encouraging, even without meaning to, anti-democratic groups in Spain?

I don't think that's the intention of the Reagan administration. But I have observed a significant psychological impact on the behavior of all extreme right forces. I think they are now aware that this psychological effect has been pro-

duced—whether it will be corrected by a more clearly favorable attitude toward democratic systems around the world is a question for the United States to answer. But it's obvious that after Mr. Reagan's election, all extreme right forces felt psychologically protected. This effect needs to be corrected.

Could NATO be a relevant factor? Is there a democratic majority in Spain favorable to joining NATO?

The people must be consulted to find out. Even among those who want to join NATO, there are obvious differences. There are those who consider NATO a positive element, which is a highly respectable position; but there are also people who want to make political careers for themselves in the process of integration into NATO, which is less respectable.

In any case, you are against enlarging the scope of NATO beyond Europe.

I think an effort must be made on behalf of detente. Mitterrand has just said something I myself have said at times, which is that we cannot accept a new "Yalta" partitioning the world. There was a certain distribution of spheres of influence after World War II, which I believe was the consequence of a war. Today, the question seems to arise rather as an attempt to avoid a new confrontation. At any rate, "Yaltas" are always the result of a climate or a state of war. I believe that state of war must be avoided, while

at the same time we must be very firm in defense of the West.

What was the immediate effect of the attempted coup?

Psychologically, I think the whole country was much more struck by the attempted coup than other places might be. The scene was recorded by television cameras, the film is a wonderful historical document. People saw the *coup d'état* like a theatrical production of a 19th-century play. There was even a certain disbelief, but what happened was all quite real. The machineguns were real. It was not fiction. So the situation was very serious. I think it must be understood that in the context of Spain's very hard, very difficult, very traumatic history, the people received that attempted *coup d'état* as a very low moral blow.

Is the army to be feared now?

The distinction should never be made between the army as a whole and the civilian population as a whole. There are putschists among citizens in uniform and out of uniform. And sometimes the attitudes of the civilian putschists are much more deplorable than the military ones. Now, I think there's a very obvious reasoning that sometimes gets forgotten. They say they are for defending the interests of the Spanish people and Spain. They must be convinced to run in the next elections and see how much popular support they really have.

STRAPPED DOWN, PLUGGED IN AND DRUG

The industrialization of childbirth in America.

This is the second article in a five-part series on health care in America funded by the *In These Times* Medical Investigative Fund. In future articles, Ellen Cantarow will discuss the crisis of public hospitals, the politics of cancer and a legislative agenda for health care in the '80s.

By Ellen Cantarow

AS SINGLE THEME RUNS through the over-medicalized lives of Americans like a sullen *basso continuo*: more isn't necessarily better. In fact, more may be worse. Annual exposure to radiation from diagnostic X-rays, for instance, may cause as many as 13,500 serious disabilities and 7,500 deaths. Or another example: each year, 300,000 Americans are hospitalized for reactions to medication, which has become one of the 10 leading causes of hospitalization in the country. As for surgical heroics, in 1974 14 million out of 18 million operations were elective, and of these, one out of every 200 resulted in death.

Such dubious plenty feeds on an "as if" principle, the most absurd expression of which came from an obstetrics professor who once taught a doctor acquaintance of mine. "The breast," the teacher told the audience, "is a pre-cancerous organ." Like a sleuth on the trail of crime, American medicine stalks through our lives as if the threat of disease lurked in every ounce of blood, sinew and bone.

Women, whose lives are routinely pathologized from puberty through menopause, know this best, at no time more piercingly than in childbirth. Ninety percent of all births in the country are low in risk, but the normal process has been so strapped down, injected with simulated hormones and manipulated with a glittering array of instruments from the forceps to the surgical knife that what is almost always a healthy process has been pathologized almost beyond recognition.

Mechanized midwives.

Consider one of the most striking pieces of equipment in the whole sleuthy arsenal—the fetal monitor. Introduced about 10 years ago onto the doorsill of life as a sort of electronic midwife for high-risk pregnancies, it is now used in the majority of births in this country. If you go into labor in an American hospital, you have more than a fair chance of being attended by the monitor, a metal box from which heavy straps extend to go around your middle. The straps have mechanisms that measure both uterine contractions and the fetal heart rate. But these external devices also pick up noisy interferences like the rumbling of the intestines, so doctors often use an internal monitor—a plastic catheter with an attached electrode that literally gets screwed into the fetal scalp.

David Banta and Steven Thacker of the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), a service to the Congress, did a study two years ago on the advantages and drawbacks of fetal monitoring. They found that fetal monitors may be helpful for women at very high risk in pregnancy, but the studies on its general usefulness are thin. The greatest argument for the

procedure seems to be that the monitor can be there when no human being can—a point I'll return to later.

As to the drawbacks, they are legion. The amniotic sac must be artificially ruptured so that the electrodes can be screwed into the fetal scalp. This can cause damage to the umbilical cord, which in turn can lead to asphyxiation of the fetus or increased pressure on the fetal brain. Screwing in the electrodes in turn can cause lacerations and hemorrhaging. Scalp abscesses are "fairly common," according to the study. With the abscesses sometimes come blood infections, invasive herpes if the mother has the herpes organisms in her genital tract, and sometimes osteomyelitis of the skull—an infection caused by staphylococcus and other organisms getting into the bone.

But by far the greatest casualty of fetal monitoring is vaginal delivery. When the monitor's human attendants read the results, they often come up with showings of "fetal distress." According to the OTA study these readings are often false because the monitor's sophistication has outstripped the ability of its readers to decipher it. The net result of "fetal distress" readings is a leap upward in Caesarian births. As of 1975, they ranged between 10 and 15 percent of all births in the country, compared with 2 to 4 percent in Holland, which by a recent tally ranked third of all capitalist countries for low infant mortality ratings, while the U.S. slogged along in its usual fifteenth place.

The medicalizing of childbirth is like the joke in which someone asks the old man of the mountain what holds up the world. "An elephant."

"But what holds up the elephant?"

"Another elephant."

"And what holds up...?"

"Don't ask. All the way down, nothing but elephants." All the way down, nothing but "interventions," each bringing with it a possible complication, which in turn needs another "intervention." The mere "lithotomy" position (you lie flat on your back with your legs spread in the stirrups) lowers your blood pressure, the flow of blood back to your heart, and your pulmonary ventilation. It also decreases the intensity of your contractions. This may prompt your doctor to give you Pitocin, a simulation of the hormone Oxytocin, which manages contractions in labor.

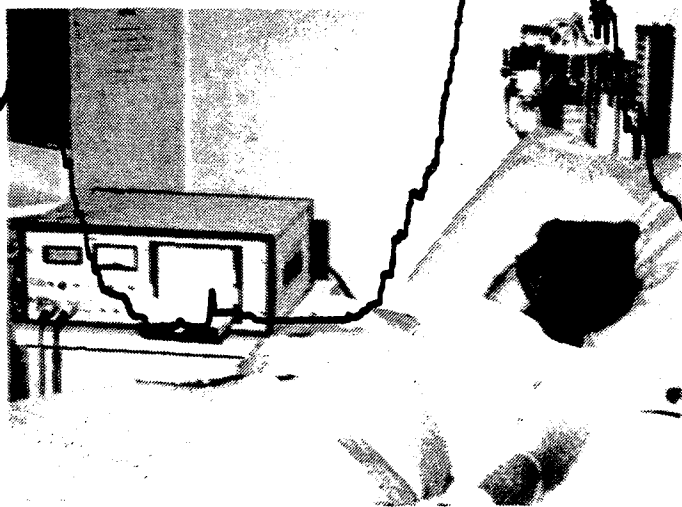
Under normal conditions the membranes rupture late in labor, but Pitocin makes them rupture early. The result of early rupturing is that the amniotic sac no longer protects the infant's head from the contractions of the birth canal against the fetal skull, and in turn this can create several problems. Deformation of the baby's head through disalignment of the parietal bones is one. Another is the possible rupturing of the blood vessels under the fetal skin, which occurs more often in infants that have been born through induced labor than it does normally.

Having Pitocin also pretty well guarantees that you'll have a fetal monitor to chart such potential hazards—which is where we came in.

Woman versus machine.

Six years ago Dr. Lewis Shenker of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology boasted that 75 percent of patients reviewed by one study of that organization had gotten Oxytocin to stimulate labor. He also justified using mon-

When fetal monitors strapped to the mother's torso pick up too much interference, an internal monitor is used instead.



1 4 1

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

WHAT REAGAN NEEDS

THE CURRENT POLITICAL CLIMATE certainly cries out for the type of coverage and analysis you are providing. I'd especially like to thank you for "The Red Scare Takes an Encore" by John Judis (*ITT*, March 11). Have you thought of extending a complimentary subscription to President Reagan? That article in particular might open his eyes some. He needs you as much as I do, but he doesn't realize it!

—Lori B. Girshick
Brighton, Mass.

OOPS!

LINDA WAGNER (*ITT*, MARCH 18) REFERS to "Tiberias, which lies in Israeli-occupied territory."

Some may wish to be reminded that Tiberias was allocated to Israel in the United Nations partition plans of the late 1940s. Tiberias has been part of Israel since the state was established. This kind of careless and reckless comment is very damaging to any decent cause Linda Wagner may espouse. Generally speaking, Tiberias "lies in Israeli-occupied territory" only in the vocabulary of those, in the Arab world or elsewhere, who believe Israel should be eliminated.

—Edward Witten
Princeton, N.J.

DIG NOBLE

MY ATTENTION HAS BEEN CALLED to Professor David Noble's animadversions on the Eurosociologist conference in Washington (*ITT*, Feb. 4) of which I was a sponsor and at which I spoke. Noble's views are extraordinary in many respects, but perhaps I may discuss two of his points. In the epoch of Reagan and Haig, Noble has discovered the real enemy: Helmut Schmidt. On the dubious assumption that we survive the next few years without a nuclear holocaust, the credit will fall not to this country's pitiable sectarians but to the German Social Democrats. To denounce them as undemocratic shows, indeed, a degree of ignorance that transcends the usual limits of tolerance. There is certainly matter for debate about their policies (a debate quite strenuous within the party), but the SPD is the legitimate heir of the German democratic tradition, and was indeed its principal guardian in the period in which Noble so wrongly accuses it of supporting "counter-revolution."

The second concerns the allegedly corrupt nature of the sponsors (the German Marshall Fund and the union and social democratic organizations of Europe) and those whom they corrupted (the victims being the small group of American socialists who took the Fund's money). The Marshall Fund is, of course, in the mainstream of technocratic opinion: where else did Noble think it would be? Since European electorates vote for the left in far larger proportions than the M.I.T. faculty would vote for collective bargaining—it is not surprising that these parties and groups are part of the established order. Noble appears ignorant of the struggles it took to get there.

As for the charge of corruption, implicit but definite, that raises other possibilities, Noble addressed us from that revolutionary stronghold, the National Humanities Center at the Research Triangle. Its president, I am bound to say, is a contributor to *Commentary*. Its funding comes from groups like the

Rockefeller Foundation. Noble's salary is ordinarily paid by M.I.T., which is funded, of course, by our large corporations. Before giving the rest of us lessons in moral purity, should he not resign these appointments and speak from a truly proletarianized perspective? It would have the additional pedagogic advantage, for him, of inducing reflection on the difference between the welfare state in the Federal German Republic and the U.S. To be sure, there would be a loss to scholarship.

—Norman Blinbaum
Washington, D.C.

WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT?

I WANT TO THANK PETER WEITZ OF THE German Marshall Fund for pointing out "inaccuracies" in my letter about the Fund. These boil down to a tense problem. I wrote that William Matson Roth is a top official of Matson Navigation and that Robert Gerald Livingston and Peter Weitz are consultants to the Trilateral Commission. Weitz says these statements are not true. According to my records and research Mr. Roth has been a director and vice president of Matson Navigation (at the crucial time when the famous M&M agreement—near-fatal to the longshoremen—was negotiated with the ILWU), and Messrs. Livingston and Weitz have been consultants to the Trilateral Commission Task Force on Industrial Relations, in the preparation of their report on "Collective Bargaining and Employee Participation (1979)." It is hard to keep up with these jet-setters and I am grateful for the update. I am assuming that all my other statements about the Fund meet with no objections.

Weitz also alluded to the fact that I neglected to mention that I have myself been a grantee of the Fund. Apparently, for some reason Weitz thinks that I am hiding that fact out of fear that it would somehow compromise my position and weaken my argument. My own involvement with the Fund is discussed at some length in my article in *The Nation*, "Corporatist Culture Ministries" (March 21).

Other letters in recent weeks have taken me to task for being a conspiracy theorist, extremist and "ill-tempered." I am amused by them and, although they hardly merit rebuttal, I must say that they have only served to confirm my worst suspicions. More important, though, these *ad hominem* attacks have diverted attention from the German Marshall Fund, where it belongs. What is the agenda of this agency? Why is it that, in a supposedly socialist newspaper, we find it so difficult to have this important discussion?

—David F. Noble
Durham, N.C.

CORRECTION

I'M DISSATISFIED WITH MY IDENTIFICATION as a former nun in my article "The Church in El Salvador" (*ITT*, March 18). Using the term "former" is a mistake because it fails to say who this person is now, or to indicate current political direction. In my case, it also implies a clerical elitism that assumes my former religious organization affiliation validates or illuminates convictions 15 years later! I am proud to have shared a faith journey that embodied the symbol and reality of sisterhood for those years, but there are other experiences I would also have chosen to de-

scribe myself. I had chosen to identify myself with the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador and the Chicago Religious Task Force on El Salvador. I consider this information useful in relation to the article.

—Renny Golden
Chicago

HEALTH CARE

I WAS DELIGHTED WITH THE FIRST IN your series on the health care industry in the U.S. (*ITT*, March 18). Although I always find much of interest in *ITT*, health care and related issues are closest to me as a person at the grass-roots end of the local health systems agency. And I was pleased (certainly not at all surprised) to note that the Health/PAC people are involved in your efforts. I've come to regard the Health/PAC bulletin as sort of a health-related complement to *ITT*.

I will share the other articles in the series with some of our other staff people and volunteers. Our future as a planning agency is none too promising (we're in Mr. Stockman's "black book"), but the problems we try to tackle are not likely to go away when we do. It's important that as many peo-

ple as possible become aware of the contradictions and inequities of our health care system, so that change can proceed.



ple as possible become aware of the contradictions and inequities of our health care system, so that change can proceed.

I never knew there was an *ITT* Medical Investigative fund. Count on me to support it as long as I can afford to. Here's a check.

—Donna Bird
Albany, N.Y.

THE CENTRIST QUESTION

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF MY INTEREST in the troubles in El Salvador I have been puzzled by one question: Who are these "centrist forces" that the U.S. is so assiduously propping up with bayonets throughout Central America?

In my researches, I tried everything. I contacted diplomatic channels, tried *Casa El Salvador*—which, by the way, is doing one hell of a good job trying to save us from another Vietnam, besides fighting like hell for the right to self-determination of the Salvadoran people—and I even went to "communist" sources: the public library and the *New York Times*.

Just when I was about to give up my search for these mysterious "centrist forces" in El Salvador, I found him.

His name is Eisenhower Fernandez, a clerk-typist at the U.S. embassy in San Salvador. "Yes, I am *el centrista*," he said with pride over crackling telephone lines. "*El dolar es mi dios*." He went on to explain, "Look at Nicaragua: without American aid I couldn't get spare parts for my Edsel."

End of mystery.

—Art Liebrez
Corte Madera

FREE PRESS

IN HIS INTERVIEW, I.F. STONE SAYS that the "realm of discourse within the great popular newspapers is limited ...on the right and on the left, but much

more limited on the left...to peripheral publications like *The Nation* and *The Progressive*."

What he does not say is that in academic publications, where all the detailed disputes occur and where university and college teachers digest ideas and store up their repertoire for classroom teaching, the left gets far greater play than its real opposite, namely the libertarians or radical capitalist (Nozick, Rand, Friedman). Outside of strict "scientific" economics, no field in the humane sciences pays much heed to the individualist, libertarian tradition.

Even in the "great popular newspapers," the true blue capitalist—as distinct from the fascist-oriented right wing with all its restrictions of individual liberty outside of commerce—has little opportunity for presenting a point of view. Not one libertarian has a regular syndicated column outside of Friedman's *Newsweek* offering. This compares unfavorably with the left, whose various representatives such as Tom Hayden, Ralph Nader, Michael Harrington, John Kenneth Galbraith, *et al.* are published everywhere and appear on National Public Radio, several FM stations (e.g., Pacifica Radio) and similar outlets.

True, few people want to read what libertarians have to say, or what socialists have to say, compared to the numbers wishing to hear what welfare-statists and Reaganites have to say. But a free press does not mean being given a forum or guaranteed an audience. It means having the right to publish and offer for sale or as a gift what one has to say. On that score, the U.S. is in far, far better shape than virtually any other society. Which says something in favor of the system in whose tradition its legal framework vis-a-vis publishing has developed.

—Tibor R. Machan
Senior Editor, *Reason*
Santa Barbara, Calif.

INDEPENDENT?

ENCLOSED IS A CHECK FOR ONE year's subscription. My father and I have read your newspaper over the last couple of years. We think it's important because it gives us a chance to be informed about issues and events not covered in the mainstream press. We differ with the term "the independent socialist newspaper," because it is naive to think that any newspaper can be completely objective when reporting the news. Does "independent" imply that *ITT* is completely separate from any party line? We hope that your writers continue to write from a socialist point of view.

—Steven Butler
Oak Park, Ill.

Editor's note: Yes, we are independent of any party or organization. Editorial policy of *In These Times* is determined entirely by its editors, in consultation with a wide variety of people on the left.

CORRECTION

The Pacific News Service copyright on John Dinges' article (*ITT*, April 1) on the State Department White Paper on El Salvador was inadvertently dropped. We regret this error.

PERSPECTIVES

If debt causes inflation, then federal deficits have little to do with it

By Richard B. Du Boff

AMONG THE TACTICS employed by President Reagan to sell his "economic recovery" plan, his warnings about the "hemorrhaging" federal government budget have been most prominent. Rampaging inflation, Reagan says, has been caused by excess government spending and "crushing" federal deficits.

Reaganites may have persuaded themselves that their combination of social budget cuts, increases in military outlays and "supply-side" tax reductions will stop inflation and revive productivity. But any examination of their core assumption—that federal deficits are the underlying cause of inflation—reveals self-delusion hard at work.

At the end of 1980, the national (federal) debt—the cumulative total of all annual federal budget deficits over time—stood at \$914 billion. This is a lot of money, but it is small compared with outstanding private debt, which totalled at least four times as much. Private household debt alone was nearly twice as great as the federal debt, with \$1.5 trillion worth of mortgages and \$300 billion of installment credit. Business sector debt stood at about \$2 trillion, with current liabilities of nonfinancial corporations (excluding banks and insurance companies) accounting for \$840 billion. Even if we add state and local government debt of over \$300 billion to the federal debt, we reach an overall public-sector debt short of \$1.3 trillion—only one-fourth of total debt in the economy at year-end 1980.

But even these figures overstate the weight of the federal debt. Of the \$914 billion of U.S. government bonds and notes outstanding, more than a third was held by U.S. government trust funds and the Federal Reserve system, which regard such securities as the ultimate re-

serve asset: the "full faith and credit" of the U.S. itself stands behind the Social Security Administration and the Federal Reserve banks, bulwarks against exactly the kind of catastrophe that threatened the very existence of capitalism between 1929 and 1940.

Furthermore, the growth of the federal debt has been modest. Between 1960 and 1980, it increased 220 percent, com-

pared to 320 percent for state and local debt, 580 percent for consumer installment loans, 600 percent for residential mortgages. The gross national product (GNP) itself expanded 420 percent between 1960 and 1980, a figure indicating that the national debt was posing no serious "carrying problems," certainly fewer than private debt loads for strained households and several hard-pressed corporations and banks.

This still leaves open the possibility that, during key years, huge federal deficits increased the nation's money supply and total volume of spending sharply enough to trigger the unprecedented "peacetime" inflation that we have known since 1966. The fact is that nothing of the kind happened.

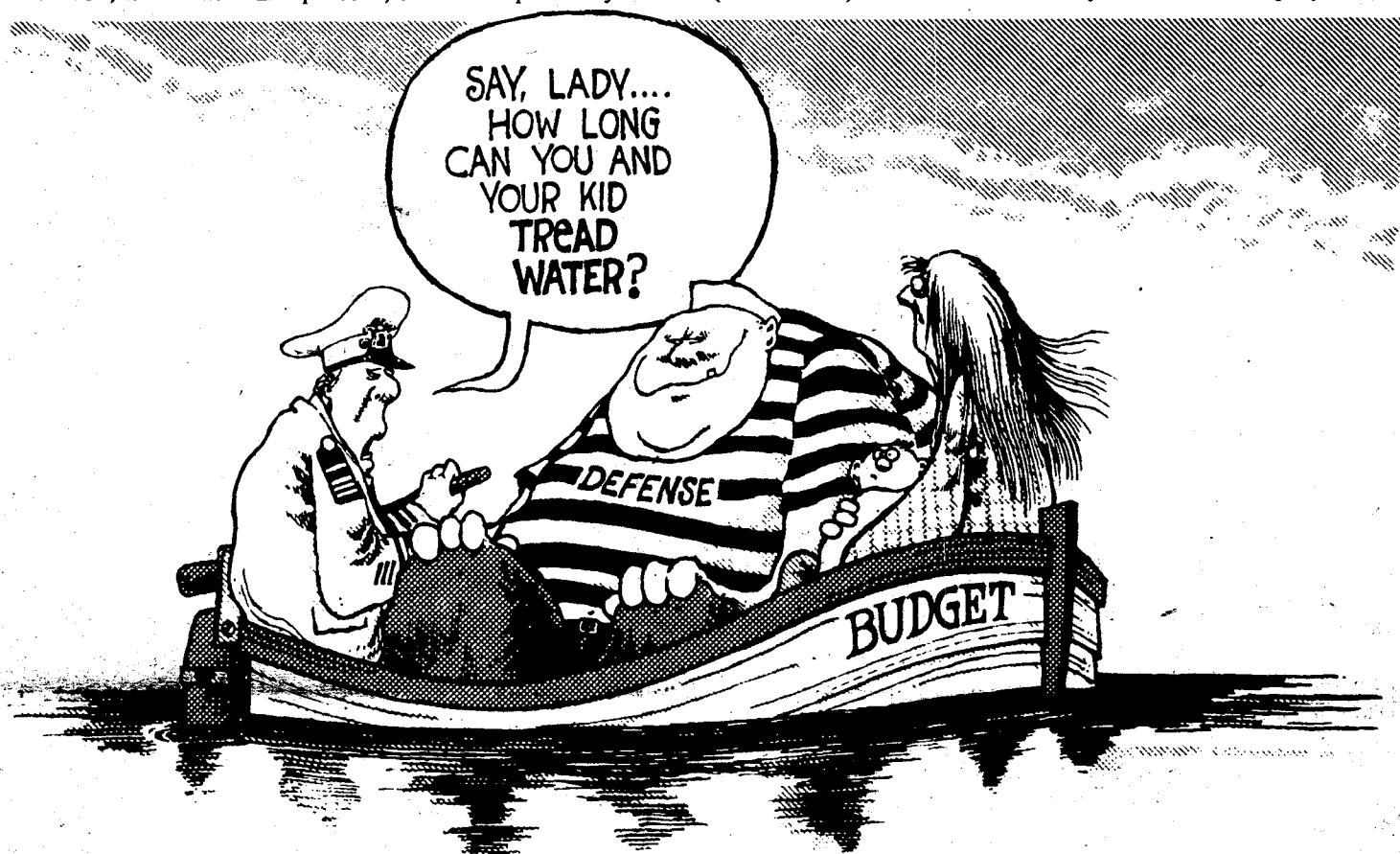
To understand why, we must look not only at the federal deficit, but at the entire public sector deficit or surplus—government receipts and expenditures for federal, state and local governments combined. "The only thing that affects the economy," Lester Thurow points out in *The Zero-Sum Society*, "is the balance between what governments collect in taxes and what governments spend."

Since 1966, federal deficits have averaged \$23.7 billion per year; but state and local governments have run annual surpluses averaging \$11.5 billion. This means that the total government sector deficit has been averaging only \$12.2 billion per year—against an annual GNP average of \$1,452 billion. The federal government's operations generated a surplus only in 1969 (\$8.4 billion). State

revenues and force up welfare spending, so that large federal deficits and economic stagnation go hand-in-hand.

Not surprisingly, recent economic history shows us that trying to fight inflation by cutting government spending is an exercise in futility. About nine-tenths of the impact of "tight" federal budgets is on output and jobs—much less of both—and only one-tenth on inflation. A 1979 Congressional Budget office study also indicates that to bring the inflation rate down by just one percentage point (from 11 percent a year to 10 percent, for instance), federal expenditures must be slashed by \$100 billion. This is three to four times as much as Reagan is promising, many times more than what he will achieve. Worse yet: while the administration is gutting programs that help the poor and unemployed, the arts, education and the environment, is rapidly escalating the military budget—the most inflationary spending of all (it puts more money into the spending stream without the consumer goods to match).

All economists would agree that, once the economy nears "full employment,"



and local units, by contrast, ran an aggregate deficit only in 1967 (\$1.1 billion). With the growth of federal grants-in-aid, distinctions among the three levels of government no longer are meaningful. In effect, the feds have been bailing out embattled state and local authorities with far more limited financing capacities than Washington. Adds Thurow, "The federal government could have cut its grants-in-aid... reduced the state and local surpluses to zero, and given itself a surplus." Result: no difference in the impact on the economy.

No correlation.

Most devastating of all for Reaganomics, however, is that government budgets have come into balance every time inflation accelerated. If balanced budgets cured inflation, we would never have had runaway prices. Major surges in the consumer price index occurred in 1968-69 (4.7 percent and 6.1 percent), 1973-74 (8.8 and 12.2 percent), and 1978-79 (9.0 and 13.3 percent). Those three inflation bulges coincide with the only three public-sector surpluses since 1966—in 1969 (\$9.9 billion), 1973 (\$7.8 billion), and 1979 (\$11.9 billion). Those were also years of relatively small federal deficits (\$9.8 billion on average), as well as the one federal surplus, in 1969.

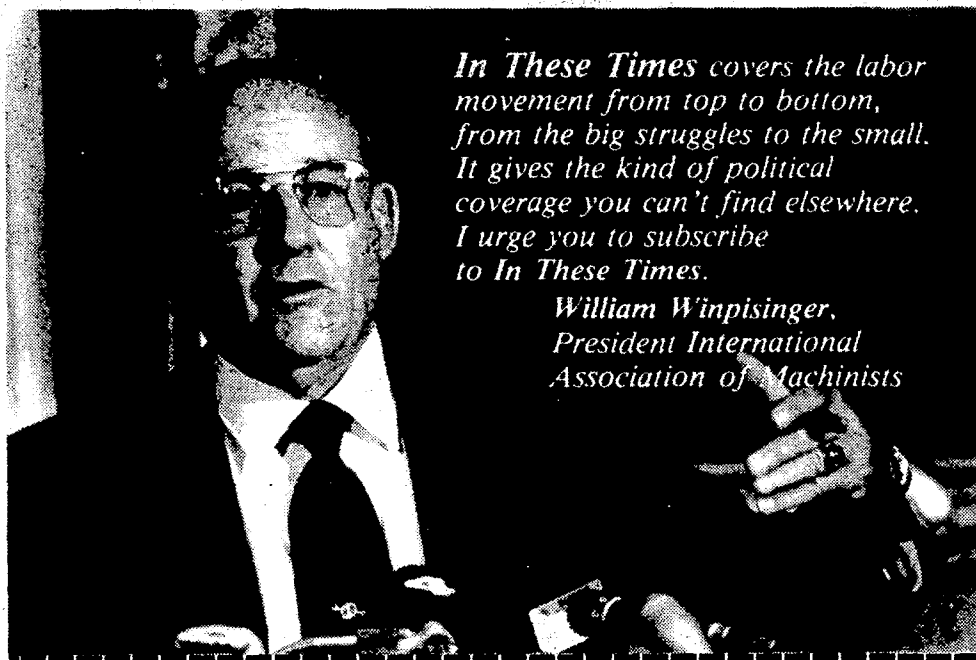
Clearly, there is no correlation between federal (or total government-sector) deficits and inflation. From 1947 through 1960, the U.S. economy first began to experience "creeping inflation" during boom years and recessions alike, a new phenomenon widely debated in the 1950s. Yet the federal government ran substantial surpluses in nine of those 14 years. Not until the 1970s did it begin to run deficits with any consistency, and they remained small until 1975. The main cause and effect relationship would appear to be this: recessions—and slack capacity in business—drag down federal

with low margins of unused capacity and dwindling supplies of critical raw materials, any large increases in aggregate spending—whether private or public—will aggravate inflation. The surest way to achieve this, moreover, is to pile heavy military outlays onto an economy in a short time span. The first stages of the 1966-69 inflationary upturn came from Lyndon Johnson's effort to finance an unpopular war without raising taxes, at a time when unemployment was declining and factories were running at near peak capacity.

The next wave of inflation may soon be swelling up, for the same reasons. The Pentagon budget for fiscal year 1982 beginning in October will reach a record \$222 billion, the first installment of a staggering build-up. The Reagan administration envisages a \$1.5 trillion in military spending over the next five years—\$200 billion more than planned by President Carter. As Professor Wassily Leontief, father of "input-output" analysis and Nobel Prize winner in economics, is telling us, Reagan's "huge jumps in military spending will mean higher inflation, a worsening balance-of-payments gap, a drain in productive investment, soaring interest rates.... Reagan hopes our gross national product will expand so much that we will be able to pay for higher defense spending without raising taxes. This is not likely to happen. In fact, I personally guarantee that it will not happen."

Here, as every so often, we may be treated to a genuine demonstration of how "big government" does cause inflation. One wonder whether Reaganomics practitioners will give this as much loving attention as they direct to the "out of control" and "inflationary" food stamp program (\$11 billion) or free school lunches (\$2.3 billion).

Richard Du Boff teaches economics at Bryn Mawr College.



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STW1

Well Read

The ill logic of the Cold War

This is the first of a new monthly column on the press and the left.

By Steven Rosswurm

IT IS A RELIEF TO HAVE THE *New York Times* on the job. The March 15 *Times Magazine* made it official: people again are concerned about nuclear war. Wade Grogan's "Rethinking the Unthinkable" is interesting but provides little new analysis or information.

Not so with E.P. Thompson's "A Letter to America," which comprised the whole Jan. 24 issue of *The Nation*. Thompson, a well-known socialist historian, is a leader of European Nuclear Dis-

Insane as it is, some people are thinking about limited nuclear war.

armament. END's goal is a nuclear-free Europe (*In These Times*, Dec. 24, 1980).

Thompson's immense polemical skills have never been put to better use. He discusses the "irrationality" of nuclear deterrence, civil defense programs, the nuclear warriors' disinformation campaigns, and the folly of thinking that missiles will hit only non-civilian targets (remember Truman's instructions: use the bomb only on a "purely military target").

Thompson's most telling arguments are against the idea of a "limited" nuclear war. Such a war, strategists claim, could be confined to a given region or level of weaponry; it could be won. This kind of thinking—as implemented, for example, in Presidential Directive 59 or the cruise missile project—brings us closer to annihilation.

If this all sounds insane, you are correct, but some people are thinking about a limited nuclear war. Until recently, most defense thinkers assumed nuclear war meant holocaust. No longer. In a recent *Foreign Policy* article entitled "Victory Is Possible" (Summer 1980), Colin Gray and Keith Payne argue that nuclear war has a wide range of outcomes and the U.S. must "wage nuclear war rationally." They assert that a shortsighted "defense community" has "neglected to think beyond a punitive sequence of targeting options."

This descent into what Thompson calls the "Satanic Kingdom" reaches its nadir when Gray, a foreign policy advisor on Reagan's transition team, argues that America's losses in such a war could be cut to 20 million. This "should render U.S. strategic threats more credible."

Thompson, who describes himself as a "socialist of William Morris' sort," bases his arguments on the "logic of the cold war." That logic, according to him, has reached the point where it only can be described as "exterminism."

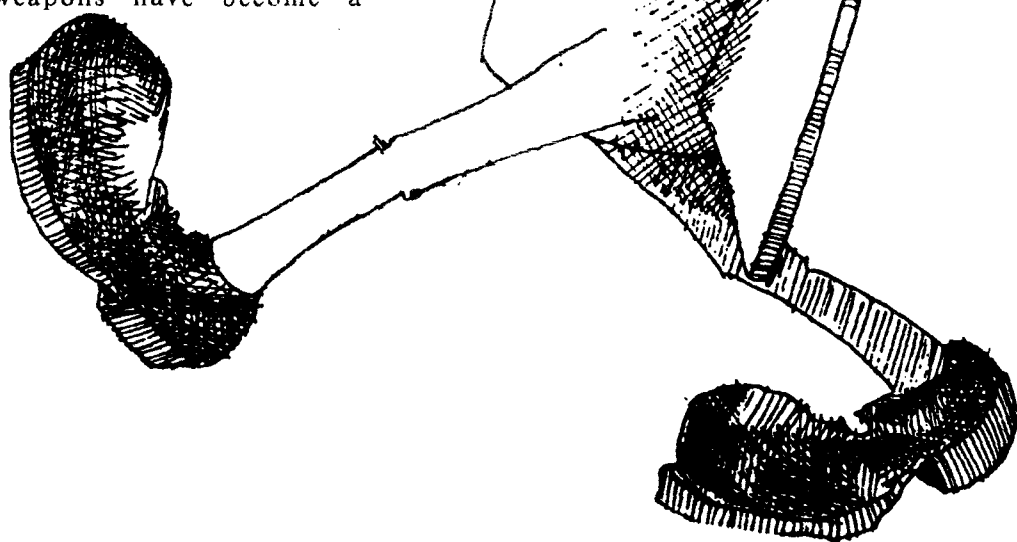
This argument was developed in a *New Left Review* article, "Notes on Exterminism, the Last Stage of Civilization," #121, May/June 1980. Addressed to the "immobilism of the Marxist Left," Thompson argues that the left ought to give absolute priority to the struggle against the "thrust toward exterminism."

Exterminism has taken on a life of its own, independent of social conditions and mode of production. We are dealing, according to Thompson, with "self-generating independent variables" as politics become exterminized and weapons "implode" upon politics.

This "thrust" is at work in both the

U.S. and the USSR, and the present hot area is Europe, not the Third World. The U.S. and USSR "do not have military-industrial complexes: they are such complexes." Given the gravity of the situation, all other goals must be subordinated to ending nuclear weaponry.

Thompson's arguments have received backhanded support from an unlikely source: Richard Garwin, chairman of the steering committee of Jason, a group of scientists who annually meet to discuss nuclear weapons and problems posed by the Department of Defense. An IBM fellow and member of the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff, Garwin argues that a new SALT agreement is "essential" and that Directive 59 must be rescinded. There is no such thing as a "limited" nuclear war: "The only thing nuclear weapons are good for and have ever been good for is massive destruction and by that threat deterring nuclear attack." Such weapons have become a



"narcotic." (Tom Buckley, "Voice of Reason Among the Nuclear Warriors," *Quest/81*, March 1981.)

Thompson's arguments about exterminism have not gone unanswered. In the most recent *New Left Review* (#124, November-December 1980), Raymond Williams, like Thompson an English socialist scholar and veteran of earlier peace campaigns, discusses "The Politics of Nuclear Disarmament." Williams is not convinced exterminism has assumed a life of its own and argues that socialists and socialist insights have a specific role in the battle against nuclear weapons.

Williams argues that the peace movement must distinguish between deterrence as strategy and deterrence as ideology. If not, it will be difficult to move the right off the terrain of national defense and demonstrate the incompatibility of such desires with nuclear weapons and the arms race. Peace work must be allied with other socialist political activity and analysis, or the former will fail: "moving and honorable refusals" will not do the job. "To build peace, now more than ever, it is necessary to build more than peace."

Thompson's pieces are a plea for immediate action to halt the "thrust toward exterminism." There is no question of the need to act and act now, but there is a question of how to act. Williams raises political issues that must be considered if we are to be successful in ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

Short Takes. RIP: *Marxist Perspectives*. After just 10 issues, *MP* joins the long list of defunct left journals. Within its circle a *post-mortem* is in order. Born: *democracy*, "a journal of political renewal and radical change." It hopes to blend historical understanding and theoretical clarity; the first issue included articles on the U.S. Constitution, Tom Paine, Milton Friedman, and the re-writing of the history of the Vietnam war. Single issues are \$4 and a year sub is \$12 from 43 W. 61st, New York 10023. ■

Steven Rosswurm teaches history at Lake Forest College.

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INPRINT

POLITICS

Evaluating Eurocommunism

The Promise of Eurocommunism

By Carl Marzani

Lawrence Hill, 346 pp., \$8.95

The Politics of Eurocommunism: Socialism in Transition

Carl Boggs and David Plotke, ed.

South End Press, 479 pp., \$6.50

By Jeff Frieden

For several years in the late '70s, Eurocommunism—the evolution of several European Communist parties away from traditional Leninist principles and their increasing independence from the Soviet Union on foreign policy issues—was a major concern of Western journalists, politicians and scholars. With the apparent death of detente and the reduced likelihood of Communist participation in the French and Italian governments, the Western press seems to have lost interest in the subject. Yet two new books by leftists in the U.S. argue that Eurocommunism is a development of lasting importance for international relations and for the possibilities of socialist transformation in the West. One, Carl Marzani's *The Promise of Eurocommunism*, is an unabashed brief for the policies of the Communist parties of France, Spain and Italy, and especially for the Italian Communist Party (PCI). The other, *The Politics of Eurocommunism*, is a collection of more skeptical articles that share a generally critical view of Eurocommunism.

Marzani is uniquely qualified to examine and explain Eurocommunism. Born in Rome, he left Italy with his anti-fascist parents in 1924, as Mussolini strengthened his rule. He fought in the Spanish Civil War and, for a few years in the late '30s, belonged first to the British and then to the American Communist parties. After a stint with the Office of Strategic Services during WWII, Marzani became one of the first victims of the Cold War at home and served three years in prison for "premature anti-fascism." Since then he has worked for the United Electrical Workers' Union (UE); run a small publishing house; written several books, including one novel; translated selected writings of Antonio Gramsci into English for the first time (in 1957); and travelled widely in Europe.

The Promise of Eurocommunism is really about Italy, and it is an excellent description of contemporary Italian politics and the theories, policies and everyday activities of the PCI. Marzani's book is a sustained argument in favor of the PCI's proposed "historic compromise," an alliance of center and left, labor and capital, Catholics and atheists, North and South to rescue Italy from social disintegration and create the conditions for socialist transformation.

The emergence of Eurocommunism, Marzani argues, can be traced to the erosion of Soviet hegemony over the international Communist movement. Challenges to Moscow began with Tito

in 1948, accelerated after Khrushchev's 1956 anti-Stalin speech, were heightened with the Sino-Soviet split and the Warsaw Pact's 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia (which the French, Italian and Spanish parties condemned), and culminated at the 1976 Berlin conference of European communists, where the Soviets basically acknowledged their defeat. This complex chain of events allowed the PCI to at once remain part of a powerful international movement and evolve its own, Italian, road to socialism.

Current PCI strategy is based on the writings of early Communist leader Antonio Gramsci. Central to Gramsci's theoretical conception, worked out in a fascist prison in the late '20s and '30s, was the idea that capitalist rule is based not only on force of arms but also on cultural hegemony. As distilled by the PCI, this has meant opposition to a Leninist insurrectionary strategy to seize power and a commitment to gradually diffuse and popularize socialist ideology among the masses. At some point—and Marzani contends that the point is near—Marxism will itself

come to exercise cultural hegemony, accepted by the vast majority of the population. Victorious in the ideological and cultural spheres, the PCI will then be able to peacefully and gradually implement its political program.

Italian example.

The bulk of *The Promise of Eurocommunism* is a graphic description of how and why the PCI has been able to achieve its current position in Italian society. In a fascinating chapter on the Catholic Church, Marzani attempts to show how many Church leaders have come to accept the PCI as a vital factor in Italian politics. After lengthy discussions with leading Catholic prelates and philosophers, Marzani concludes that the Church, like the "liberation theologians" in Latin America, "has decided that the capitalist system is slowly sinking and the Church has no intention of going down with it."

In a more general sense, Marzani dates the PCI's emergence as Italy's most important political force to the divorce referendum of 1974, when the Christian Democrats lost overwhelmingly

to a coalition of leftists, feminists and lay liberals. From then on the PCI has played the leading role in attempts to salvage Italian agriculture, to repair the nation's ailing economy, to combat pervasive corruption and the Mafia, and to force the Christian Democrats to reach a working agreement with the left. All of these developments are, in Marzani's opinion, prerequisites of a socialist solution to Italy's crisis. His point is hammered home in dozens of interviews with members and leaders of the Party, prominent clergymen and politicians, labor leaders, peasants and intellectuals. The narrative is illustrated by Marzani's visits to the grass roots: a meeting of PCI leaders at the huge Fiat plant in Turin, a peasant cooperative in Sicily, Red Bologna, which the left has ruled since WWII. Through it all emerges Marzani's fundamental vision of the PCI as Italy's major force for change.

The Promise of Eurocommunism is not a theoretical work, despite a concluding chapter that takes issue with Ernest Mandel's Trotskyite critique of Eurocommunism. Marzani prefers to build his theoretical case with concrete examples, and the result is a well-rounded and illuminating argument. Yet some readers may disagree with Marzani's optimism. Similarly, Marzani's economic arguments—especially his response to those critics who charge that the PCI's reformism is strengthening, not weakening

the capitalist order in Italy—may not convince all his readers. And his attempt to draw a direct line from Gramsci to the historic compromise is somewhat strained.

Nevertheless, this is a first-rate account of an issue of great contemporary importance. Marzani is so honest and graphic an observer and participant that any attentive reader can draw his or her own conclusions about the PCI's prospects. *The Promise of Eurocommunism* is an immensely informative, well-written and enthusiastic book.

New left.

If Marzani's political and historical perspectives have their roots in the "Old Left" experiences of the '30s and '40s, the contributors to *The Politics of Eurocommunism* are just as firmly rooted in the "New Left" experience of the '60s and '70s. The 15 authors of these 14 articles share a general orientation that is as anti-statist as it is anti-capitalist. There are major differences among the contributors, but they tend to applaud the Eurocommunists for jettisoning orthodox Leninism, especially the concept of a vanguard insurrectionary party, the dictatorship of the proletariat as an ultimate goal, and Soviet-style socialism as a model. But because they share a sympathy for the "emerging movements"—ecology, feminism, workplace and community control—they are leery of the Eurocommunists' attachment to the state and "traditional politics" as the locus of struggle. Carl Boggs' concluding article expresses the consternation shared by most of the volume's authors succinctly. The basic problem with Eurocommunism is that "it downplays or ignores the place of collective organs of struggle—workers' and neighborhood councils, action committees, grassroots movements of feminists, students, unemployed, etc.—in shaping democratic transformation." For Boggs the main question of socialist strategy is

Italian church leaders have no intention of going down with what they see as a sinking capitalist ship.





A Communist Party election rally in Spain.

not how to change or destroy the bourgeois state, as it is for Eurocommunists and Leninists, but "how to broaden the concept of democracy and social transformation to incorporate autonomous centers of dual power so that an overturning of the social division of labor can begin."

After a brief introduction by the editors, the volume begins with general surveys of the three major Eurocommunist parties: George Ross on the French party (PCF), Joanne Barkan on the PCI, and Jose Rodriguez-Ibanez on the Spanish party (PCE).

Then follows a series of articles on the parties' relationship to various popular movements. Temma Kaplan looks at the PCE's attitude to workers' commissions, regional separatists and feminists; Andrew Feenberg in one chapter and Louise Beaulieu and Jonathan Cloud in another examine—and draw diametrically opposed conclusions about—the PCF's relationship to the legacy of the May 1968 uprisings in France; the PCF's attitude toward terrorism and feminism are explained by Suzanne Cowan and Annarita Buttafuoco respectively. The third section looks at the international setting in which Eurocommunism is developing. Freda Block explains the economic environment, Louis Menashe discusses the Soviet attitude and Paul Joseph American foreign policy toward Eurocommunism, and Diana Johnstone examines Eurocommunist views of the Common Market. Finally, Plotke draws lessons for the American left, while Boggs considers both the transformational potential and some of the shortcomings of Eurocommunism.

At the risk of oversimplifying, the contributors can be seen as representing three different shades of opinion. Some, like Feenberg, believe that the Eurocommunists are moving in the right direction. Their commitment to internal and popular democracy may be incomplete, but generally they are important components of a revolutionary strategy in Western Europe. Others, like Barkan, Beaulieu and Cloud, are basically hostile. Eurocommunism for them is an obstacle to militancy, an opponent of "emerging movements" and a proponent of bourgeois order and capitalist austerity. Boggs and others are somewhere in the middle: the Eurocommunist parties have evolved in a posi-

tive direction, but their future remains ambivalent.

The authors have very strong opinions on Eurocommunism, and this is fine, but often their tendentiousness intrudes on the facts. This is most obvious when the authors contradict each other or themselves on factual matters, as when Beaulieu and Cloud call the Rocardian faction of the French Socialist Party "a younger generation of more militant Socialists," while Johnstone describes it as made up of pragmatic technocrats. (I think Johnstone is better supported by the evidence.) Similarly, Temma Kaplan asserts that "the autonomous groups will ally with the PCE only to the extent that it gives up its old Leninist structure," then 10 pages later presents conclusive evidence that at

least one such "autonomous grouping," the working class, is the strongest force in the party for Leninist orthodoxy. The Beaulieu and Cloud article is a virtually unsubstantiated contention that "the ecology movement offers the principal hope for the future" and contains some assertions that, to me at least, seem to border on the objectionable: "The European working class, lulled into believing that by adhering to the Socialist and Communist parties it is truly 'living its history,' must transcend the complacency of this self-definition and transform its institutions into the real instruments of liberation."

On the other hand, there are several excellent articles. Those by Menashe, Joseph, and Johnstone are informative investiga-

tions of the international relations of the Eurocommunist parties; Block's presentation of the economic background is similarly illuminating, as are Ross' and Rodriguez-Ibanez' historical surveys of the PCF and the PCE.

Because both Marzani and the contributors to *The Politics of Eurocommunism* share an aversion to Leninism theories of insurrection, they tend to regard the Eurocommunists' motion away from Leninism as a more or less natural evolution away from illogic. For them, Leninist insurrectionism in the West was an aberration, artificially kept alive by Soviet domination of international Communism. Whatever one may think of Leninism, this interpretation does not explain why several important European Communist parties (in

Portugal and Greece, for example) are not Eurocommunist in any meaningful sense, or why the PCF is so half-hearted in its Eurocommunism, or why in every Eurocommunist party there remain substantial pro-Leninist and pro-Soviet factions. The emergence of Eurocommunism clearly involved a political choice, or perhaps more accurately the victory of one political point of view within the parties concerned. The problem is to determine why and how the choice was made or the victory won.

The second problem—most prominent in *The Politics of Eurocommunism*—is more immediate and more politically troublesome. The authors represented here, like many other American socialists, combine their opposition to Leninism with a belief that industrial workers remain a, if not the, most important real or potential force for socialism in capitalist societies. It is precisely the industrial proletariat that is the strongest supporter of Leninist orthodoxy in the Communist parties of Italy, Spain and France. This apparent contradiction is neither addressed nor acknowledged in the two books under consideration. Is a non-Leninist approach to socialist transformation compatible with a belief in the self-liberating potential of the working class, when the most important politically active segment of this class is staunchly Leninist? The question may seem distant from the reality of the United States—where workers are not, to say the least, a major public force for Leninism—but it has immediate political importance in Europe and broad implications here in the U.S. ■

Jeff Frieden, an editor of *Appeal to Reason*, has lived in Italy and written on the development of the international Communist movement, as well as on the politics of international economic relations.

NOTEBOOK

Decolonizing Theology: A Caribbean Perspective

By Noel Leo Erskine
Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y. 10545, 130 pp., \$6.95
Erskine, a native Jamaican and former Baptist minister there, has written a fascinating historical study of the complex nature of Afro-Christianity in the Caribbean and the American South. Continuing in the tradition of Vincent Harding, Gayraud Wilmore and James Cone, Erskine holds that black religion has long embodied visions of liberation that are secular as well as spiritual. The interaction between black theology and the various strains of "liberation theology" popular in Central and South America portend a period of great intellectual creativity in the Caribbean and this book is a fine contribution to it.

DRR

Everybody's Business: An Almanac

Edited by Milton Moskowitz, Michael Katz and Robert Levering
Harper & Row, 916 pp., \$9.95
A sub-subtitle describes this excellent reference book as "an irreverent guide to corporate America," but the

sprightly style never undermines the authors' solid research on corporate giants and near-giants. *Everybody's Business* profiles hundreds of companies—their heads, their histories and their holdings. Especially useful to consumer advocates and anti-corporate activists is the handy index of 4,000 brand names that lets readers know at a glance who makes what.

DRR

I Looked Over Jordan

By Ernie Brill
South End Press, 291 pp., \$6.00, paperback
Brill's collection of stories are all thematically linked to the lives of people who work in a big city hospital: the aides and orderlies who do most of the hard physical labor.

Having worked in this world for ten years, Brill knows it well, and he has pointed out in his stories how the hierarchical is buttressed by the racial, since the hospital's least fashionable, but most necessary tasks are performed by black and brown men and women.

The eight stories that make up this collection are about those at the bottom of the pecking order and their occa-

sional victories not only against arrogant nurses and bureaucrats, but also against needless suffering and death. One story may be a fairly straightforward narrative, while another may incorporate stream-of-consciousness passages, but Brill's ear for nuance and dialogue is always evident.

LR

Portrait of a People

By Eli Weinberg
International Defense and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, 104 Newgate Street, London, EC1A 7AP, \$10
Leftist Eli Weinberg recorded many of the events in the struggle of blacks in South Africa over a quarter century prior to his fleeing the country in 1976. Although many of his photographs are somewhat stiff, valuable mainly as archival documentary, he also captured moments of drama as well as occasional vignettes of everyday life and work, generally the better photos in the book.

DM

Going for Coffee: Anthology of Contemporary North American Working Poems

Edited by Tom Wayman
Harbour Publishing, Box 119, Madeira Park, BC V0N2H0 Canada, 224 pp., \$6.95
Here's more evidence for the growth of literature about work. "Who reads this book touches the heart of North American life," writes the editor, Canadian poet Tom Wayman. Ninety-three Can-



adians and Americans are represented, including well-known names (Joyce Carol Oates, Patrick Lane) but stressing first-time writers. The poems originate in foundries, clinics, universities and homes, and the collection's spirit comes from the fact that the poems are written by people who do the jobs they write about.

AF

Contributors: Anne Flanagan, David Moberg, David Roediger, Lenny Rubinstein.

HISTORY

The women's dream of perfect harmony

True Love and Perfect Union: The Feminist Reform of Sex and Society

By William Leach
Basic Books, 320 pp., \$17.50

By Linda Gordon

This is a surprising and exasperating book. It is a book about the American feminist movement between 1850 and 1880 that consistently avoids the central issue of that movement—male supremacy, that is, the oppression of women, and how to change it.

At first the book's idiosyncracies might appear the result of whimsical, even antiquarian interests. Indeed, the book is antiquarian in its overabundant, undisciplined presentation of historical anecdotes, quotes, personal and organizational names.

sion follows many observations that are correct and insightful. His book contains a wealth of previously unavailable information about 19th-century feminism, information that should change the general conception of what it was. The late 19th-century feminists were, as he says, seeking to transcend the tradition of possessive individualism that was the ideology and often the description of capitalist values. They did not believe in the inevitability of conflict between individual self-interests. Instead they believed that a society of perfect harmony could be designed. This harmony had to rest on perfect heterosexual harmony in private life—hence Leach's title. (Leach ignores the aspect of 19th-century feminism that de-emphasized heterosexuality.) Harmony in the home would

the boundless optimism of the 1870s feminists that social science, rational analysis and then redesign of social structures could end socially-caused suffering and injustice—optimism that there could be a society without long-range conflicts of interest. Their political energy was centered in their conviction that male supremacy was dysfunctional for the progress of society, that once that irrationality was demonstrated to all, even the most die-hard sexist would accord a new respect to women for the sake of the whole social organism.

That this vision was naive and false was only part of its weak-

wanted to repress privacy itself, to deny the dreams and nightmares produced by the subconscious. Applying the doctrine of "no secrets," they would have repressed all psychic activity other than the conscious and the public.

Leach offers an appropriate and well-documented criticism of this positivist tendency in 19th-century feminism. But two structural faults—one in his "evidence" and one in assumptions—undermine his argument. First, he ignores much feminist work and writing. He admits this selectivity in his introduction, but then goes on to draw general conclusions about feminism from his very limited sources. Moreover, there is clearly a point at which omission becomes so serious that one is no longer examining feminism itself. For example, the entire discussion of the feminist reform proposals for sex, love and marriage ignores the issue of women's subordination to men in these affairs. Leach emphasizes feminists' concern about

ing, garments preventing free movement, and styles forcing women to present themselves as sexual objects.

In case after case, Leach presents feminism as if it were a virtually genderless movement, in which complaints about men's power are at most extremely subsidiary. Naturally such a picture of feminism systematically filters out the area in which feminists welcomed conflict, and understood it as a road to personal and social growth. The "feminism" Leach criticizes is a caricature of feminism that he has drawn and then criticizes as if it were reality.

In fact, the feminist flirtation with positivist ideas was partial and complex. From the moment of positivism's first influence on feminists, the latter were criticizing and amending it in order to make it serve their interests. And their interests lay with a conflict theory of society, a theory that put sexual conflict and sexual politics in the center, and that insisted on the transformation of gender.

The second major problem with Leach's work is that he has not learned enough from his subjects. He is attempting to build a case against them without grasping the critique they were making of his own assumptions.

Let me head off one potential attack on what I am saying right now: I do not exempt feminists and feminism from criticism. On the contrary, that work of criticism is essential, politically and intellectually. But it advances nothing to criticize them with the same standards they were rejecting as sexist, and this is what Leach is doing.

For example, he is quite correct in his conclusion that in their rejection of romantic love the feminists fell into sentimentalism. But Leach wants to defend romantic love without grasping the feminist point that it was a male-defined mode. It reflected a male situation in the world, a self-deluding fantasy of aloneness, without responsibilities for others; and a fantasy world absolutely unavailable to women denied the experience of being alone, individual, acting in and against a world of repressive forces. Thus the feminists may rightly be criticized for their sentimentalism, but not for their rejection of the romantic tradition.

To describe the same problem at a psychological level: It is true that many feminists erred in rejecting an inevitable inner psychic conflict, and hence rejecting the irrational dimension of human experience. They did so because the only model of conflictual human development they knew was—and this was true long before Freud—based on the male experience. The struggle with authority in the family was conceived as a struggle of son against father. Leach, following Lasch here, does not appear to notice that feminists were rejecting the male-supreme sex/gender system and family.

In his conclusion Leach complains about the feminists' "inability to refute the charge that equality would desex women." But of course they could not refute it; they believed it to be true, and welcomed it. Is Leach criticizing them for their struggle against the female and male genders, as then constituted, because he too finds those genders desirable? Or has he simply not heard the criticism?

Linda Gordon teaches at University of Massachusetts, Boston, and is the author of *Women's Body, Woman's Right: A Social History of Birth Control in America*.

The "feminism" Leach attacks is a caricature he created.

WHAT BREAKS UP THE HOME?



Unemployment for men.

Bad employment for women and children.

"The easiest way."

WHAT WILL SAVE THE HOME?

The participation of the home-maker in all governmental control of these problems. For this reason we demand

VOTES FOR WOMEN

Harmony in the home was, for 19th-century feminists, the basis of social change.

Its ratio of detail to argument is much too high. But closer attention reveals that the idiosyncracies of the argument are not accidental but part of a coherent critique of feminism, rather popular in certain intellectual circles today (for example, in the *New York Review of Books* and the *Nation*) and most notably argued by Christopher Lasch.

Leach's conclusion is that feminism was ultimately repressive. His argument is very close to that made by Christopher Lasch, but Lasch focuses on the Progressives of the early 20th century. Leach considers the late 19th-century feminists to be forerunners of Progressivism. They sought to suppress social conflict by promoting a vision of a rationalized, harmonious society run by expert social scientists.

Leach's conclusion is precisely wrong: ultimately, feminism was liberating. Yet Leach's conclu-

train people to rationalize all human motivation and aspiration, bring together the public and private spheres and turn the society into a cooperative commonwealth. In this dream of harmony, all these feminists were anti-capitalist and somewhat socialist, although their socialism called for class cooperation, not class struggle.

Positivism.

The method these reformers relied upon for this transformation was science. Leach's greatest contribution in this book is his exploration of the use that feminists made of positivism. Leach emphasizes, for example, the feminists' call for "no secrets" in their campaign for sex education, their confidence that hygienic education would demystify sexual differences. It is difficult, perhaps, for a late 20th-century reader, even a feminist, to grasp

ness. Ultimately more serious, Leach argues, was its elimination of conflict, both psychological and social. The feminist rejection of conflict led, for example, to a rejection of romantic love and its replacement by sentimentalism. Romantic love was often tragic, and in every case suggested that love (*amour*, sexual passion) was a force so powerful, elemental and irrational that it was disorienting, propelling its victims towards destinies over which they had no control, which at best could result in poor choices, at worst in destruction.

The rationalized love preferred by feminists subordinated sexual passion to friendship, promised a happy ending and "suppressed those pre-Oedipal tensions that had their source in the breakdown of older forms of authority and that constituted the basis for romantic fantasy and passion." Indeed, the feminists

divorce as a sign of social disharmony, and their preference for stable marriage; he hardly mentions feminist support for women's divorce rights, nor the notorious adventures of certain feminists in helping women escape abusive husbands.

Can one call these omissions? Critique of women's subordination is, after all, the center of feminism.

Desexed.

This kind of omission is systematic in this book. In a chapter on fashion and dress reform, Leach emphasizes the failure of the feminist movement to achieve a unified opposition to the capitalist domination of women's clothing tastes. But he leaves out the "aspect" of the dress reform movement that, I submit, was its heart: a critique of conventional dress as part of the imprisonment of women, through corset-

ART «» ENTERTAINMENT

DOCUMENTARIES

Troubled conscience of the atomic scientist

By Steven Kovacs

The Day After Trinity: J. Robert Oppenheimer and the Atomic Bomb (88 minutes) has potential to introduce a mass audience to the circumstances of the development of the atomic bomb and especially to the manner in which the U.S. government used individuals to further its own far-reaching political and military aims. The film, which received an Academy Award nomination for Best Documentary, will be aired on many PBS stations Sunday night, April 29.

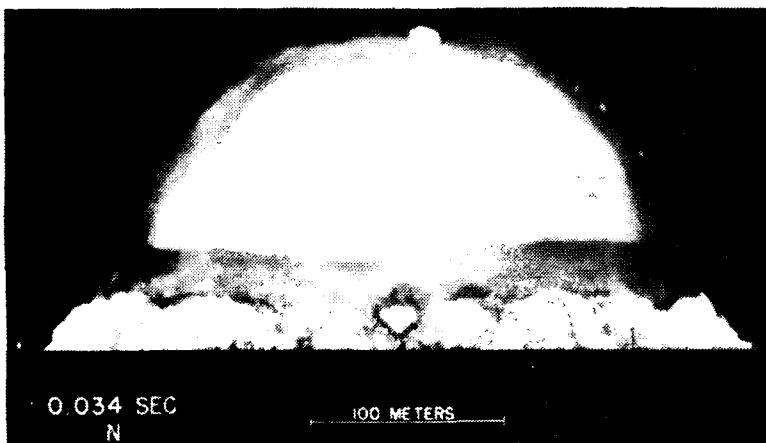
Filmmaker Jon Else is unsure whether his focus is Oppenheimer or the development of the atomic bomb. He starts with the man, becomes fascinated with the process of gathering the best minds for the Manhattan project, and ends with the discrediting of the great scientist once his views failed to support the Cold War policies of Washington. Interviews with leading scientists show a similar lack of focus. Their personal testimonies have to do as much with their reminiscences about Los Alamos as with their recollections of the brilliant but diffident man who headed the project. Still the documentary gives us a sense of this gigantic undertaking.

What emerges most vividly is the collective excitement of hundreds of the best scientific minds in America. Their feverish collaboration during a period of two years in a remote region of New Mexico was fueled by the passionate curiosity of scientists engaged in unleashing the most powerful form of energy known to man. Their dedication to its rapid development was further strengthened by their determined opposition to fascism.

After a lapse of 35 years, responsible, peace-loving intellectuals try to come to terms on screen with their role in creating this terrible weapon. They ask themselves why they did not stop their research once Germany surrendered. The answer is appalling yet understandable: no one thought of stopping, because they were so close to their longed-for objective.

Yet they were sensitive human beings who were, and are even more now, aware of their responsibility. They recall their reaction to the successful explosion of the bomb over Hiroshima. First, elation that it worked, followed only seconds later by the realization that their invention had destroyed tens of thousands of lives.

That burden on his conscience turned Oppenheimer into an opponent of the development of the H-bomb and an advocate of restraints on the use of nuclear weapons. The final part of the film shows how his moral stand became his undoing. In 1954 the man who had once directed the nation's most secret military project failed to get security



clearance for any further work on nuclear weapons. He was relegated to the sidelines of scientific research for the rest of his life. There was no reason to deprive Oppenheimer of access to confidential research. But his views ran counter to the militarism of the Cold War.

The unbridled passion of the scientific mind, the herd instinct

When Oppenheimer (right) raised doubts about the H-bomb the military cut off his research.

that can govern even the most brilliant intellects and the casual sacrifice of an individual for reasons of state are the main themes of this documentary. Its most important function is to bring this fading story, so vital to the



shaping of post-war America, into sharp focus for a mass audience, and thus make it a part of our national consciousness once again.

Steven Kovacs is the author of *From Enchantment to Rage: The*

Story of Surrealist Cinema. He has recently completed producing and directing *Einstein: The Man Behind the Genius* for TV. *The Day after Trinity* is distributed by Pyramid Films, Box 1048, Santa Monica, CA 90406.

FILM CLIPS

Tighten Your Belts, Bite the Bullet, 48 minutes

By James Gaffney, Martin Lucas and Jonathan Miller
City Crisis Film Group, 208 W. 13th St., NYC 10011, (212) 620-0877; and Icarus Films, NYC.

The best scene in this new documentary takes place outside Lincoln Center. Shiny limousines unload furred and jeweled guests to a dinner in honor of Felix Rohatyn of the Municipal Assistance Corporation, the banking group that now virtually runs the city. One tuxedoed banker agrees to give a few words about Rohatyn's baby, the Emergency Financial Control Board. "It's great. It puts an intervening layer in there. It separates the politicians from the constituencies."

That's about as clear an explanation of what's been happening to our cities as you're going to get. This film shows how and why that has happened and highlights opposition struggles that, too occasionally, have been successful. It is also a timely delineation of city politics in New York and Cleveland.

How does Mayor Koch feel about being divested of his elected power? "Everything they tell me to do, I would hope I was there beforehand. But if I fail, I know they're there to see what has to get done gets done." Such statements are juxtaposed with lucid analysis by David Gordon, economist at the New School; Jonathan House of the Committee of Interns and Residents; and Adam Veneski from the People's Firehouse. (Veneski and the People's Firehouse Committee coordinated a successful struggle to block decay, redlining and planned obsolescence in a New York neighborhood.)

The machinations of the Cleve-

land bankers become more evident, seen after the New York Big MAC-ers have their say. The smug statements and puffy faces are remarkably similar in both cities; George Grosz couldn't have etched more callous and greedy faces. The distortions of commercial media are evident in the clips from local TV news, where an anchor woman trivializes and ridicules Kucinich's stand.

Labor groups, tenant organizations, minority coalitions and other disenfranchised city residents will find this film useful.

DDH

Agent Orange: A Story of Dignity and Doubt, 28 min.

Produced by James Gambone, Film in the Cities
2388 University Ave., St. Paul, Minn. 55114, (612) 646-6104
Interviews with veterans and their families suffering effects—terminal illness, deformed children—of exposure to Agent Orange alternate with Defense department footage and congressional testimony by veterans. Martin Sheen, who was script consultant, narrates the film. (Sheen's brother, a veteran, was probably affected by herbicide exposure.)

SL

Broken Arrow

Produced by Steve Talbot
"Broken arrow" is the U.S. military term for a nuclear weapons accident. This absorbing and quick-paced documentary reveals that at least 26 such accidents have already happened. A B-52 carrying nuclear weapons crashed in North Carolina in 1961; another caught fire on a runway in North Dakota last year; and also last year a three-ton nuclear warhead exploded in Arkansas. No nuclear war-

head has yet been detonated although some have come "awfully close." Conventional explosives have, however, scattering highly radioactive material such as plutonium for miles around the site.

The film focuses on San Francisco. Nuclear weapons are built, stored and transported in the Bay Area, making it a strategic target in a nuclear war. More likely to occur first, however, is the release of radioactive gas caused by earthquake or accident. The Concord Naval Weapons Station 35 miles east of the city stores nuclear weapons one-

and-a-half miles from a major earthquake fault.

While filming the base's grounds, Talbot and crew were arrested and held while the FBI confiscated and copied the film.

Since *Broken Arrow* first aired on San Francisco's public TV station KQED last November, it has won three awards for investigative journalism and was broadcast on some PBS stations March 1. Contact your local station to find out if it has been aired yet.

AG

Contributors: Angela Gennino, Sheryl Larson, David Roediger

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A-020

Italy

Continued from page 9
Soviet Union."

Pajetta led the PCI delegation to the Soviet Communist Party's 26th Congress, where he was shunted off to a Moscow union hall far from the main proceedings to give his speech stressing the need for nonalignment, which *Pravda* hesitated to publish, while the Soviet press prominently displayed interviews with Portuguese CP leader Alvaro Cunhal attacking Eurocommunism.

Such signs of Kremlin displeasure, following extensive PCI criticism of the Kremlin, lead friend and foe to ask the PCI when it is going to "break with Moscow." Never—if we can help it, is the answer. In the PCI's foreign policy establishment of experts and journalists, even the sharpest critics of Soviet policy are against the "break with Moscow" being urged on them. In a conversation at the PCI's Center for the Study of International Politics (CESPI) in Rome, Romano Ledda explained why.

"We find that, in general, a policy of rupture—not only with Moscow but with any other international reality—is not reasonable. We spent 20 years trying to get together with the Chinese. We have always tried not to transform even the most drastic differences into breaks. Not only in the Communist movement, but concerning the whole range of world political forces. We've had many sharp differences with social democrats, but we've never broken with social democracy the way other parties have. We believe a policy of international presence is more fruitful than a policy of rupture.

"And without meaning to be too presumptuous, we think basically that what we are sowing in the international communist movement—even if we don't have a model we are trying to teach others—contributes to democratizing the movement. And a rupture today would deprive the communist movement of an important component, a ferment that is working on the relations between democracy and socialism. If we want to do our best for a socialist solution in Europe, a 'third course,' we have to realize that a socialist 'third solution' in Europe is also connected to democratization of Eastern Europe. A rupture today would only help the bureaucrats resist every effort at emancipation. And who would profit?"

Ledda noted that the PCI has developed a "laic" approach to international relations and does not believe in "schisms and excommunications." Indeed, it has no official position of its own on such key matters as what is called, with increasing irony, "real existing socialism" in Eastern European countries. The PCI left wing around Ingrao denies that they are "socialist" while its right wing around Napolitano calls them "totalitarian." The whole complex phenomenon is under examination, and Italian scholars would hardly welcome a break that would cut them off from the countries they are studying.

The foreign editor of *Unita* pointed out that the PCI's precious network of international contacts, including third world liberation movements, would be jeopardized by a "break with Moscow." "A number of countries," especially in the third world, would be forced to choose between us and Moscow," he said. "Just as there are 'Afghans' (pro-Soviet hardliners) in the PCI, we think there are 'Italians' in some other parties and we want to encourage them," a *Unita* journalist said, adding, "Of course, some of them may be in jail..."

Ledda noted that the PCI's critique of the Soviet system had been broadening. "In the earlier phase, we had a disagreement with the Soviets on the relationship of democracy to socialism. And that's the crucial point. Today, the disagreement has spread to important problems of international strategy as well. Our criticism over Afghanistan, or Poland, are not matters of detail. They are part of a concerned judgment we make on the US-SR's power politics, on Soviet responses to international crises."

Ledda said it would be a mistake to lump together the interventions in Angola, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. "In my opinion, the Cuban intervention in Angola was correct. And in fact even Andrew Young recognized that it was 'stabilizing' in the face of an aggression from South Africa." But in Ethiopia, the US-SR acted according to the "logic of blocs," and Ledda has particularly criticized the use of Soviet aid to crush the Eritrean national liberation movement. Finally, "in Afghanistan it's a classic great power intervention. These are three fairly different phenomena."

"So by now our disagreements cover a fairly important range of issues. But why break off? If there's an intervention in Poland, then... But here and now, how can we best aid Poland, inside or out? Inside, not out."

Ledda considers this a dangerous and crucial time for Europe. "The split in two parts blocks the social dynamic in all countries." Europe is faced with stagnation and even war if it is reduced to mere outposts of two contending power blocs. The question today is whether the tremendous test of strength is leading to war, or to a new "Yalta," a deal between the superpowers over the heads of Europe.

"We give great weight to the way the two superpowers perceive each other," said Ledda. "Reagan says El Salvador is the work of the Soviets, the Soviets say Poland is the work of foreign agents. On the contrary, we are facing autonomous movements that have nothing to do with superpower games. Walesa is not an invention of the Americans. We are very attentive to trying to dissipate these suspicions. We want the great powers to have a more realistic view of the world, which is much more complicated and diverse than they imagine."

Spain

Continued from page 11

OE) and Communist (PCE), united as never before by their common peril, have called for a broad coalition government with Socialist participation to save democracy. Unconditionally backed by the PCE, the PSOE asked to enter the government on a broad platform of democratization of the state, elimination of terrorism, efforts to combat the deepening economic crisis and clarification of the vexed question of regional autonomy. Part of the UCD responded favorably to the idea. But prime minister Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo has so far refused, preferring to schedule debate on the most emotionally divisive issue of all, the new divorce law, whose provision for divorce "by mutual consent" is strongly opposed by the Catholic hierarchy and the right. The timing seems questionable when the armed forces may seize on any "politicians' quarrels" to take over and restore "order."

A disturbing passivity.

Certainly, the vast majority of the Spanish population, despite its notorious "dis-

enchantment" with politics, prefers the present free system to a return to military rule. The Feb. 27 demonstrations of that sentiment were truly massive, though several days late. But what stops a military coup is not public opinion but the certainty of encountering active resistance on the part of the major institutions that run society, and on the part of the general population. As for Spanish institutions, they are still in the hands of the rightists who would not at all mind a military takeover. Something like Socialist participation in the government would be needed to begin to fill key administrative posts with people devoted to democratic process.

The institutional heritage of fascism might be offset by a population visibly ready to fight for democracy. But this is strikingly absent in Spain. Upon news of the attempted putsch in Madrid, there were protest demonstrations...in Italy. But not in Spain.

Asked to explain the population's disturbing passivity, both Gonzalez and Carrillo replied with the same word: fear. "Fear dominated," Carrillo told *La Repubblica*. "You must always take into account that the country has not yet overcome the psychological traces left by the civil war and the savage repression that followed." The Spanish communist lead-

er acknowledged that "Disillusion, the *desencanto*, is strong even in my party."

"The sick man of Europe is this country," said Gonzalez. "Let's not forget that the left was worn down and destroyed by the experience of the civil war, and that the relationship of forces that emerged in the post-Franco era is based on that ruin." Spain's drama is that "the authoritarian right's power has not yet been destroyed, and the job of weakening it begins now. All that has been changed are a few rules of the game, but the new democratic rules are at the mercy of power centers that remain largely invisible, out of control."

Gonzalez warmly praised the "precious contribution" of the Communist party and Santiago Carrillo's "sense of responsibility" in offering to support Socialist participation in the government.

Carrillo said he spent the night of Feb. 23, which he thought his last, recalling poems by Machado, Lorca, Neruda and Whitman. He also thought "bitterly" of his past unheeded calls for unity against the right. "And all at once, as in a nightmare, I realized that the democratic coalition we had been calling for and that up to now had seemed impossible to achieve, might yet be put together in quite different conditions—that is, in front of an execution squad."

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

SEATTLE, WA

April 11

Come to a fundraising party for In These Times. Music, dancing, refreshments and conversation. At PRAG House, 747 16th E., from 7:30 to midnight. Tickets are \$2.00. Call 634-2856 for more information.

SAN FRANCISCO AREA

Help Berkeley Citizen's Action (BCA) candidates win. There will be a literature drop on APRIL 11 (meet at the BSA Office, 3126 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley at 10:00 a.m.). Get out the vote on APRIL 21 (meet at 3126 Shattuck Ave. at 4:00 p.m.). There will be a dinner for campaign workers at 8:00 p.m. If you can phone, canvass, or contribute, want more information or a ride, call: Kerry Tremain at (415)441-5466 (days) or 826-9178 (eves.).

April 17

Carl Marzani will discuss his new book, "The Promise of Euro-Communism," on Friday at 8:00 p.m. at 225 30th St., San Francisco.

PORTLAND, OR

April 12-13

Carl Marzani will discuss his new book, "The Promise of Euro-Communism," on Sunday at 7:30 p.m. at Red Rose School, Friends Hall, 4312 S.E. Stark and on Monday at 2:00 p.m. at Lewis and Clark College.

NEW YORK, NY

April 13

Come to a Tribute/Toast for Jack Newfield, "the conscience of New York." Music by Harry Chapin and Tom Paxton. Join Michael Harrington, Ruth Messinger, Moe Foner, Joe

Conason and the mystery "Roque Roaster" at the Village Gate, 189 Thompson St., from 8-10:30 p.m. There will be wine, beer, cheese and fruit. Tickets are \$25.00. For reservations and more information, contact New York DSOC, 125 W. 72nd St., NYC 10023, (212) 787-1691.

April 26

The Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade will hold their 44th Anniversary Dinner at the Statler Hotel. Hear Gloria Steinem, founder and Editor of Ms. Magazine and Victor Navaski, Editor of the Nation, Entertainment and dinner is \$20.00. Write or call: VALB, 799 Broadway, New York, NY 10003. (212) 674-5552 (from 2-8 p.m.)

EUGENE, OR

April 14-15

Carl Marzani will speak on "The Promise of Euro-Communism." Check for details on university bulletin boards and in the local papers.

LOS ANGELES, CA

April 22-30

The Jewish Film Festival, an alternative collection of international independent cinema, will take place at Melnitz Hall of UCLA on April 22, 23 and 26, and at the Town and Country Cinema in Encino on April 27-30. Programs include Israeli New Wave, Yiddish Culture and Labor, Contemporary Identity. For more information, call: (213) 654-8292.

April 24

There will be a debate between Carl Marzani, the author of "The Promise of Euro-Communism," and Carl Boggs, co-editor of "The Politics of Euro-Communism" on "The Future of Euro-Communism." Friday at the Socialist Community School, 2936 West 8 Street, at 8:00 p.m.

SANTA MONICA, CA

April 26

Carl Marzani will speak on "The Future of Euro-Communism" on Sunday at 7:30 p.m. at Marine Park Auditorium, 1406 Marine.

DIRECTORY

The Directory is published to facilitate contact with organizations frequently referred to in the pages of *In These Times*. Each organization has paid a fee for its listing.

Citizens Energy Project
1110 6th Street, NW, #300
Washington, DC 20001

The Citizens Party-National Office
1605 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

The Citizens Party of Illinois
109 N. Dearborn, Suite 603
Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 332-2066

Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy
120 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

C.O.I.N.-Consumers Opposed to Inflation in the Necessities
2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 413
Washington, DC 20036

DSOC-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee
853 Broadway, Room 801
New York, NY 10003

Midwest Academy
600 West Fullerton Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614

National Center for Economic Alternatives
2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

NAM-New American Movement
3244 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60657

New Patriot Alliance
343 S. Dearborn, Room 305
Chicago, IL 60604

Science for the People
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Cambridge, MA 02139

Socialist Party
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212-255-6283

Movies

Continued from page 24

on daily life of a time whose horrors usually make it impossible for us to envision. The film was an astonishing hit in Germany and travelled the festival circuit in the U.S. Less mechanical and more ominous was the several-years-old (but new here) *Knife in the Head*, a terrifying cerebral thriller about today's Germany hurtling toward a police state.

You didn't have to stick to subtitles, though, to find entertaining and thoughtful features. John Huston's faithful adaptation of Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood* garnered critical praise wherever it managed to find a booking, often at festivals. And although no one can still quite believe it, a sweet, funny, remember-the-'60s film was made for a mere \$60,000 (less than many 30-second commercials)—John Sayles' *Return of the Seacabus Seven*. Other independent fiction features, like *Gal Young Un* and *Heartland*, long in the making, finally got theater audiences. Feature documentaries—*The War at Home* and *Best Boy*, both last year's Oscar favorites; *The Wobblies*; *The Trial of Al-*

ger Hiss—also got bookings and enthusiastic audiences.

Perhaps even more important than fiction features in marking the progress of American independent filmmaking are short films, especially documentaries. Last year included a healthy handful of successes, including *Taylor Chain*; *On Company Business*; *The Free Voice of Labor*; *Taking Back Detroit*; *The Willmar Eight* and the Oscar-nominated *Day after Trinity* (see page 21). The 60-minute *Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter*, with its vivid, sensitive interviews with women you can't forget, set new standards for social-history documentaries.

Business.

What we got a chance to see last year in movies depended not only on what people made but how they marketed their films.

In the world of the studios, the rocking rise in the costs of marketing was probably the biggest trade news of the last year. It wasn't, comparatively speaking, a bad year for total ticket sales, or total profits. Even a major-league miscalculation like *Heaven's Gate*, or the money-managing disasters of Zoetrope are expectable—if highly publicized—scandals in a volatile business. But one trend is serious and general: the profit margin is being eaten away by the rising costs of paper, postage, ad space, TV time and all the attached costs of pub-

licity. These costs are jeopardizing what has been a sure-fire Hollywood policy of recent years—produce fewer films and promote the hell out of them. (The film whose ad budget is bigger than production costs is no longer a joke.) It's finally a time of diminishing returns on the diminishing-movie policy. Unfortunately, that's no reason—given the fiscal as well as ideological conservatism of the industry—to assume that more or cheaper movies will come out of the studios.

More movies are, however, appearing out of the independent film community, thanks not only to filmmakers but also to film distributors—who are often the same harried people. The maturing of the American independent film is marked by the development of distribution agencies. First-Run Features searches out theatrical bookings for independent films and currently is sponsoring a three-month series in a New York commercial house of 17 films. The series may tour the nation in the summer. The Independent Feature Project, meanwhile, links up independents with film buyers. Fall 1980 marked the second annual independent feature film market, held just before the New York Film Festival. Self-distribution is building on years of practice and cooperation between filmmakers, and it's getting easier for users to find and use films,

CULTURE SHOCK



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Penthouse publisher Bob Guccione plans to buy the New York building in which the anti-pornographic lobbying group Women against Pornography presently has rent-free offices. (Zodiac)

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS HEADLINE?

Seen in *Variety*: "Cubans Devour Canadian TV Pack

But Say 'Nyet' to U.S. References."

BY ANY OTHER NAME

A Louisville firm that disposes of

radioactive and chemical wastes has changed its name from Nuclear Engineering Company to U.S. Ecology, Inc. (Zodiac)

with the help of the books *Reel Change: A Guide to Social Issue Films* and *In Focus: A Guide to Using Film*. Two new services—the Information Center's forthcoming reference system of social-issue films and CineInformation's computerized mailing lists of interested film users, both in New York—will further facilitate film use.

Documentaries, especially shorts, were given an enormous boost in public recognition by increased TV coverage this year. One of the major reasons for that was the work of TV Lab. TV Lab dedicates itself to fin-

ding funds for, helping to produce and getting on the air (on PBS, through WNET-NY) independent documentaries. Producers David Loxton and Kathy Kline not only say they foster pluralism in style and subject—they mean it, and they do it.

The year in film was neither as gaudy nor as pompous as the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (the name alone is a clue) would like to portray it. Its highlights were not in first-run cheap sentiment, but in critical analyses of real life, especially in documentaries and in historical films. ■

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PUBLICATIONS

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CANVASSING DIRECTORS. National political and electoral organization is seeking individuals with two or more years experience supervising all aspects of door-to-door solicitation. Excellent income potential, benefits and professional experience. Must be willing to relocate. Send resume to 1377 K St., N.W., Suite 302, Washington, D.C. 20005.

IMMEDIATE OPENING for administrator/organizer in progressive Jewish organization in N.Y.C. Political and Jewish experience a must. Salary: \$13-15,000 / commensurate with experience. Send resume to: Agenda, 150 5th Avenue, Rm. 1002, New York, NY 10011. (212) 620-0828.

HEAD ORGANIZER for New York statewide multi-racial direct action welfare rights organization. Must have experience in campaign development, fund-raising, supervising and leadership development. Salary: \$14-16,000. Send resumes to: Downtown Welfare Advocate Center, Search Committee, 853 Broadway, Rm. 1105, NY, NY 10003.

RESEARCH COORDINATOR. Institute for Food and Development Policy seeks person to research U.S. agriculture, write papers, popular articles. Must have background

in U.S. agriculture, popular writing; political commitment. \$13,000. Begin summer. Minority, woman sought. Resume and writing samples to Nick Allen, IFDP, 2588 Mission, San Francisco, CA 94110.

BOOKS

ARE CREATIONISTS — including Reagan—naïve? Or charlatans? Or plain intellectual cowards? Read "In the Beginning" and judge. Send \$3.00 ppd. for copy to N.J. Helmick, Box 1714, Boise, ID 83701.

WRITING BY CANDLELIGHT: E.P. Thompson, \$7.95. Redletter Books, 666T Amsterdam, NYC 10025.

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1980 AT THE MOVIES

In the Realm of the Senseless

BY PAT AUFDERHEIDE

Last year in film was more interesting and varied than you could ever have guessed from a look at the lineup for the Oscars. Once again the Academy Awards threatened to give us a national case of aesthetic diabetes, with their sincere and extravagant celebration of the most sentimental strain in our popular art form.

There is something especially cloying this year about the deference shown to *Ordinary People* and to *Raging Bull*. They are being honored for their integrity, for the exceptional fact of having content and intent within a form that naturally abhors it. *Ordinary People* is as muted as the middle class world it depicts, while *Raging Bull* is boxing-ring mean and angry. They both, however, use the anguish of alienated daily life to set the tone of the film.

God knows divorce, intergenerational misunderstanding and male self-destruction are all real and underdiscussed issues in our society. But something rings false in this lavish and reverent praise for what is, in one case, a men's weepie, and in the other, an essay on self-inflicted male pain—as if they were cathartic explorations of social issues. It's depressing, in fact, because it points up how far commercial features are from exploring the anguish of those situations, despite the best intentions of people who think of themselves as artists in film. With these favorites it's painfully clear what made *Kramer vs. Kramer* everybody's baby last year: pain, the pain of divorce, within the format of a soap opera that men could watch (movie-going demographics favor men). Even the inarticulate pain of daily life can now be commoditized.

Not that it isn't always hard to evoke the simple, terrible drama of daily life without sinking into bathos, especially in a format as rigid as that of a Hollywood feature. There were, however, moments worth noting last year. *The Great Santini*, like *The Rose*, had characters and scenes that were damningly revealing about the long-range cost of living out stereotypic sex roles. (The most dependable Hollywood theme has always been romance, so perhaps it's appropriate to an era that markets pain that a year's bright spots should reveal the dark side of sex roles.)

There were also Hollywood features last year that provided honest moments of joyful sentiment in daily life. The first half of *Coal Miners' Daughter* created tender family warmth and an earthy romance. *Fame's* documentary segments communicated the enthusiasm of youth and the energy of performance so well that you could forgive it its plot. *Melvin*

and *Howard* dished out both the good news and the bad news about trailer life and American dreams of success. It showed us what kind of national hero Howard Hughes was.

A few films fulfilled the traditional box-office promise of a solid evening's entertainment. *Carny* and *The Long Riders* were two offbeat examples. *The Stunt Man* provided taut comedy rather than the degrading yuks of much of this year's comedy fare. (We can only wonder whether this would have been said about *Nine to Five* if Patricia Resnick's script had survived director Colin Higgins' rewrite.) *The Stunt Man* started out in 1971 as an antiwar film, and still has a smart-alecky version of an antiwar message amid the action.

Usually, however, if you wanted something other than diversion, you turned away from Hollywood. In many cases that meant reading subtitles.

Some features generated interest because their experiments with form stimulated conversation among the small group of filmgoers who go to the theater to think. Among them was *Hitler, A Film from Germany* (finally released here thanks to Coppola's Zoetrope)—a gift to New York intelligentsia as well as a risky exploration of an open moral wound. Another Coppola-spurred release (and Oscar favorite), *Kagemusha*, looked suspiciously like an epic textiles show, but its majestic style captivated viewers already in awe of director Kurosawa's reputation. Helke Sanders' 1977 (and finally showing here) *The All-Around Reduced Personality*, about a woman photographer's daily life in Berlin, also played creatively with form, raising questions about what socially conscious art is, as well as exposing the

difficulties of executing it.

Several foreign features addressed social issues without dissolving into tracts. *Angi Vera*, a festival film and Oscar hopeful from the year before, went to American theaters this year. Hungarian Pal Gabor's treatment of a young idealist's transformation into a bureaucrat kept its tension up till the end. The Australian *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* was a tragedy of racism and of colonialism, made sharper by the contrast between the grimly-limited social world of aboriginal Blacksmith and the beautifully-photographed natural world. Another Australian film, *Breaker Morant*, also used history to raise a social issue. The film recreates an actual incident from the Boer War, one that raised the same issues that My Lai did for Vietnam. Three British and Australian soldiers, everyone agrees, killed Boer prisoners and a German missionary. Was their action more wrong than the rest of the war? Were they more guilty than their superiors? The film alternates between scenes of their court martial and scenes from the incident, and creates an intense sympathy for the three men, without slighting the fact that they acted barbarously.

The so-called New German Cinema also continued to generate thoughtful films on social issues. Among them was *The Children of No. 67*, a traditionally-constructed film about working-class adolescents in Nazi Germany and their political choices. Like Truffaut's *The Last Metro*—and of the same order of sentimental depth—the film is a window

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